C. 4.

THE

Blessedness

OF THE

RIGHTEOUS

Opened, And further Recommended From the Consideration of

The VANITY of this MORTAL LIFE:

In Two Treatises, On { *Psal.* 17. 15. / *Psal.* 89. 47.

By *J. HOWE*, M.A. sometime Fellow of *Magdalen* College, *Oxon.*

When he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is, 1 Joh. 3. 2.

Ἀλλὰ τὰ κακὰ ἀ δυνατὸν ἐν θεοῖς ἱδρύσθαι τὴν δὲ θνητὴν φύσιν, καὶ τόνδε τὸν τόπον περιπολεῖ ἐξ ἀνάγκης. Διὸ καὶ πειρᾶσθαι χρὴ ἐνθένδε ἐκεῖσε φεύγειν ὅτι τάχιστα. Φυγὴ δὲ ὁμοίωσις θεῷ κατὰ τὸ δυνατὸν ὁμοίωσις δὲ δίκαιον, καὶ ὅσιον μετὰ φρονήσεως γένεσθαι. *Plat. in Theæt.*

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237
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To the Reader.

I Am not at all solicitous, that the World should know the history of the conception of this Treatise. If there be any thing that shall recompense the pains of such as may think fit to give themselves the trouble of perusing it, in the work it self, I should yet think it too much an undervaluing of them, if I did reckon the minuter circumstances relating thereto, fit matter for their entertainment.

Nor am I more concern'd to have it known what were the inducements to the publication of it. Earnest protestations and remonstrances of our good intentions in such undertakings, as they leave men still at liberty to believe or doubt at their pleasure, so they gain little if they be believed. It is no easie matter, to carry one even, constant tenour of spirit through a work of time. Nor is it more easie, to pass a setled invariable judgment concerning so variable a subject; when in heart that may seem wholly framed and set for God this hour, shall look so quite like another thing the next, and change figures and pictures almost as often as it doth thoughts.

And if a man should be mistaken in judging himself, it would little mend the matter, to have deceived others also into a good opinion of him.

But if he can approve himself to God in the simplicity of an honest and undeceived heart,

Sanct. *The peace that enſues, is a ſecret between God and him.* They are Theater enough to one another, (*as he ſaid to his friend*). *'Tis an incloſed pleaſure: A joy which the ſtranger cannot intermeddle with.*

'Tis therefore any man's concernment herein rather to ſatisfie himſelf than the world. And the world rather to underſtand the deſign of the work than the Author; and whither it tends, rather than whereto he meant it.

And 'tis obvious enough, to what good purpoſes diſcourſes of this nature may ſerve. This is, in the deſign of it, wholly practical; hath little or nothing to do with diſputation. If there be any whoſe buſineſs it is, to promote a private, divided intereſt; or who place the ſum of their Religion in an inconſiderable and doubtful opinion; It doth not unhallow their Altars, nor offer any affront to their Idol. It intends no quarrel to any contending, angry party. But deals upon things in the ſubſtance whereof Chriſtians are at a profeſſed agreement. And hath therefore the greater probability of doing good to ſome, without the offence of any.

'Tis indeed equally matter of complaint and wonder, that men can find ſo much leiſure to divert from ſuch things, wherein there is ſo much both of importance and pleaſure, unto (what one would think ſhould have little of temptation or allurement in it) contentious jangling. It might rather be thought, its viſible fruits and tendencies ſhould render it the moſt dreadful thing to every ſerious beholder. What Tragedies hath it wrought in the Chriſtian Church! Into

low

*how weak and languiſhing a condition hath it brought the Religion of profeſſed Chriſtians? Hence have riſen the intemperate preternatural heats and angers that have ſpent its ſtrength and ſpirits, and make it look with ſo meagre and pale a face. We have had a greater mind to diſpute than live; and to contend about what we know not, than to practiſe the far greater things we know; and which more directly tend to nouriſh and maintain the Divine Life. The Author of that ingenious ſentence * (whoever he were) hath fitly expreſt what is the noiſom product of the itch of diſputing. It hath begot the ulcerous tumours, which, beſides their own offenſive ſoreneſs, drain the body, and turn what ſhould nouriſh that, into nutriment to themſelves. And its effects are not more grievous than the pleaſures which it affects and purſues are uncomb and unnatural.* The rough touch of an ungentle hand. That only pleaſes which exaſperates (*as the Moraliſt aptly expreſſes ſome like diſaffection of diſeaſed minds*). Toyl and vexation is their only delight. *What to a ſound ſpirit would be a pain, is to theſe a pleaſure.*

* Frurtus diſputandi ſcabies Eccleſiæ.

* Ut ulcera quædam nociturus manus appetunt & tactu gaudent & fœdam corporum ſcabiem delectat quicquid exaſperat: Non aliter dixerim his mentibus in quas voluptates velut mala ulcera erupſerunt, voluptati eſſe laborem, vexationemque. *Sen.* de tranquillitate animi.

Which is, indeed, the triumph of the diſeaſe, that it adds unto torment reproach and mockery, and impoſes upon men by ſo ridiculous a deluſion (while they are made to take pleaſure in puniſh-

ing themſelves) that even the moſt ſober can ſcarce look on in a fitter poſture, than with a compaſſionate ſmile. *All* which were yet ſomewhat more tolerable, if that imagined vaniſhing pleaſure were not the whole of their gain; or if it were to be hoped, that ſo great a preſent real pain and ſmart, ſhould be recompenſed with as real a conſequent fruit and advantage. But we know, that generally by how much any thing is more diſputable, the leſs it is neceſſary or conducible to the Chriſtian life. God hath graciouſly provided, that what we are to live by, ſhould not coſt us ſo dear. And poſſibly, as there is leſs occaſion of diſputing about the more momentous things of Religion, ſo there may be ſomewhat more of modeſty and awe in reference to what is ſo confeſſedly venerable and ſacred, (though too many are over-bold even here alſo) than ſo fooliſhly to trifle with ſuch things. Therefore more commonly, where that humour prevails, men divert from thoſe plainer things, with ſome ſlighter and ſuperficial reverence to them, but more heartily eſteeming them inſipid and jejune, becauſe they have leſs in them to gratifie that appetite; And betake themſelves to ſuch things about which they may more plauſibly contend; and then, what pitiful trifles oftentimes take up their time and thoughts; Queſtions and Problems of like weighty importance (very often) with thoſe which, the above-named Author tells us, this diſeaſe among the Greeks prompted them to trouble themſelves about, as, "What number of Rowers "*Ulyſſes* had? Which was written firſt, the "*Iliad* or the *Odyſſes*? &c. So that (as he ſaith) "they

Sen. de Brev. vit.

"they spent their lives very operously doing "nothing. Their conceits being such, that if "they kept them to themselves, they could yeild "them no fruit, and if they published them to "others, they should not seem thereby the more "learned, but the more troublesom, (to this purpose he truly sayes). And is it not to be resented, that men should fall away the solid strength and vitall joy which a serious Soul would find in substantiall Religion, for such toyes! Yea, and not only throw themselves, but trouble the world and imbroil the Church with their impertinencies! If a man be drawn forth to defend an important truth against an injurious assault, it were inexcusable if he love to purchase his own peace by declining it. Or if he did sometimes trace his thoughts to some petite question, that with many are so hotly agitated, for recreations sake, or to try his wit and exercise his reason, without stirring his passions to the disturbance of others or himself; 'twere an innocent divertisement, and the best purpose that things of that nature are capable of serving. But when contention becomes a mans element, and he cannot live out of that fire, strains his wit and racks his invention to find matter of quarrel; is vexed, nothing said or done by others shall please him, only because he means to please himself in disputing; Disputes only that he may dispute, and loves dissention for it self. This is the unnatural humour that hath so unspeakably troubled the Church, and disspirited Religion, and filled mens Souls with wind and vanity; Yea, with fire and fury.

This hath made Christians gladiators, and the Christian World a clamorous Theater, while men have equally affected to contend, and to make ostentation of their ability so to do.

And, surely, as it is highly pleasurable to retire ones self, so it is charitable to call aside others out of this noise and throng, to consider silently and feed upon the known and agreed things of our Religion; which immediately lead to both the duties and delights of it.

Among which there are none more evident and undoubted, none less intangled with controversie, none more profitable and pleasant than the future blessedness of the righteous, which this discourse treats of. The last end is a matter so little disputable, that 'tis commonly thought (which is elsewhere more distinctly spoken to) not to be the object of election, and so not of deliberation consequently, but of simple intention only, because men are supposed to be generally agreed as touching that. And the knowledg and intention of it is apparently the very Soul of Religion; animates, directs, enlivens, and sweeteas the whole thereof. Without which Religion were the vainest, most irrational, and most unsavoury thing in the World. For what were there left of it, but an empty unaccountable formality, a series of spiritless and meerly scenical observances and actions without a design? For whereas all mens actions else, mediately tend to the last end, but that not being in view with the most, they pitch upon other intervenient ends; which, though abstracted from the last, should not be; yet they are actually

actually to them the reason of their actions, and infuse a vigor and liveliness into them: Religion aiming immediately at the last end, that being taken away, hath no rational end or design at all. And it cannot but be an heartless business, with great solemnity, in a continued course, to do nothing but professedly trifle, or keep up a custom of certain solemn performances which have no imaginable scope or end.

And because the more clearly this our last end is understood, the more powerfully and sweetly it attracts and moves the Soul, this Treatise endeavours to give as plain and positive a state and notion of it as the Text insisted on, compared with other Scriptures, would afford to so weak an eye.

And because men are so apt to abuse themselves with the vain and self-contradicting hopes of attaining this end without ever having their spirits framed to it, or walking in the way that leads thereto, as if they could come to Heaven by chance, or without any design or care of theirs; The proportion is endeavoured to be shewn, between that Divine likeness *in the vision and participation whereof this Blessedness consists, and the* Righteousness *that disposes and leads to it. Which may it be monitory to the ungodly and prophane, who hate and scorn the likeness of God wherever they behold it. And let me tell such from (better-instructed) Pagans, "That * there "is nothing more like or more acceptable to God, "than a man that is in the temper of his Soul "truly good, who excels other men, as he is himself "excelled (pardon his hyperbole) by the immor-"tal God.*

* Nihil est Deo similius aut gratius quam vir animo perfectè bonus, &c. *Apul. de Deo Socratis.*

"That

* Inter bonos viros ac Deum, amicitia est, conciliante virtute, amicitiam dico? etiam necessitudo, & similitudo, &c. Sen. de Prov.

"*That * between God and good men there is* "*a friendship, by means of virtue; a friendship?* "*yea a kinred, a likeness; in as much truly as* "*the good man differs from God but in time* (here "sprinkle a gram or two), *being his disciple,* "*imitator and very off-spring.*

* Νεμεσᾶ γὰρ ὁ θεὸς ὅταν τις ψέγῃ τὸν ἑαυτῷ ὅμοιον, ἢ ἐπαινῇ τὸν ἑαυτῷ ἐναντίως ἔχοντα. ὅστι δ' οὗτος ὁ ἄγαθος. — πάντων ἱερώτατον ὅστι ἄνθρωπος ἄγαθος, καὶ μιαρώτατον ὁ πονηρὸς —— Plat. in Minoe.

"*That * God is full of indignation against* "*such as reproach one that is alike to him, or* "*that praise one that is contrarily affected* (or "unlike), *but such is the good man,* (i.e. *he* "*is one like God*). *A good man* (as it shortly "after follows) *is the holiest thing in the world,* "*and a wicked man the most polluted thing.*

Τούτου δ' ἕνεκα φράσω. ἵνα μὴ ἄνθρωπος ὢν ὀνθρώπου. οἷς ἥρω Διὸς υἱὸν λόγῳ ἐξαμαρτάνης.

And let me warn such haters of holiness and holy men in the words of this Author immediately subjoined; "*And this I say for this cause, that* "*thou being but a man, the son of a man, no* "*more offend in speaking against an Heroe, One* "*who is a Son of God.*

Methinks men should be ashamed to profess the belief of a life to come, while they cannot behold without indignation, or mention but with derision, that holiness without which it can never be attained, and which is indeed the seed and principle of the thing itself.

But such are not likely much to trouble themselves with this discourse. There's little in it indeed

deed of Art or Ornament to invite or gratifie such as the Subject it self invites not. And nothing at all but what was apprehended might be some way useful. The affectation of garnishing a margent with the names of Authors, I have ever thought a vain pedantry; yet have not declined the occasional use of a few that occurred. He that writes to the World, must reckon himself debtor to the wise and unwise. If what is done shall be found with any to have promoted its proper end; His praises to God shall follow it (as his prayers do that it may) who professes himself,

A Well-willer to the
Souls of men. *J. H.*

Christian

Chriſtian Reader.

YOU whoſe hearts are ſet on Heaven, who are daily laying up a treaſure there, here is a welcome Meſſenger, to tell you more than perhaps you have well conſidered, of the nature of your future Bleſſedneſs, and to illuſtrate the Map of the Land of Promiſe, and to bring you another cluſter of its Grapes: Here is a uſeful help to make you know that Holineſs doth participate of Glory, and that Heaven is at leaſt virtually in the Seed of Grace: Though this life be properly called a *life of Faith*, as contradiſtinct from the *intuition* and *fruition* hereafter, as well as from the lower life of *ſence*; yet is it a great truth, and not ſufficiently conſidered and improved, that we have here *more than Faith*, to acquaint us with the Bleſſedneſs expected: Between *Faith* and *Glory*, there is the *ſpirit* of *holineſs*, the love of God, the heavenly deſires, which are kindled by Faith, and are thoſe branches

branches on which the happy flower and fruit muſt grow: They are the *name* and *mark* of God upon us: They are our *earneſt*, our *pledg*, and the *firſt fruits*; And is not this more than a word of Promiſe only? Therefore though all Chriſtians muſt live by Faith, marvel not that I tell you, that you may, you muſt have more than Faith. Is not a *pledg*, and *earneſt*, a *firſt fruits* more? Therefore have Chriſtians, not only a Spirit to evidence their Title, but alſo ſome foretaſte of Heaven it ſelf: For *Faith* in *Chriſt* is to recover us *to God*; and ſo much as we have of God, ſo much of fruition; and ſo much as Faith hath kindled in you of the love of God, ſo much foretaſte you have of Heaven; for you are deceived, if you think, that any one Notion ſpeaketh more to you of *Heaven* and of your *ultimate end*, than *THE LOVE OF GOD*. And though no unſound ill-grounded Faith will ſerve to cauſe this ſacred Love, yet when it is cauſed, it overtops this cauſe; and he that perceiveth the operations of a ſtrong effectual Love, hath an acquaintance with God and Heaven which is above that of *believing*: *Faith ſeeth* the Feaſt, but

Love

Love is the *tasting* of it. And therefore it is, that the holiest Souls stick closest unto God, because (though their reasoning faculty may be defective) they know him by the highest and most tenacious kind of knowledg, which this World affordeth, (as I have lately shewed elsewhere). Here you have described to you, the true *witness* of the *Spirit*; Not that of supposed *internal voices*, which *they* are usually most taken up with, who have the smallest knowledg, and Faith, and Love, and the greatest self-esteem, or spiritual pride, with the strongest phantasies and passions; But the *objective* and the *sealing* testimony, the Divine Nature, the renewed Image of God, whose Children are known by being *like* to their heavenly Father, even by being *holy* as he is *holy*. This is the Spirit of Adoption, by which we are inclined by *holy love to God* and confidence in him, to cry *Abba Father* and to fly unto him: The Spirit of *Sanctification* is *thereby* in us the Spirit of *Adoption*: For both signifie but the giving us that *love to God*, which is the *filial nature*, and our *Fathers Image*.

And this Treatise doth happily direct thee

thee to that faithful beholding God in Righteousness, which must here begin this blessed assimilation, which full intuition will for ever perfect.

It is a happy sign that God is about to repair our ruins and divisions, when he stirreth up his servants to speak so much of *heaven*, and to call up the minds of impatient complainers, and contentious censurers, and ignorant self-conceited dividers, and of worldly, unskilful, and unmerciful Pastors, to look to that state where all the godly shall be one, and to turn those thoughts to the furtherance of *holiness*, to provoke one another to *love* and to *good works*, which too many lay out upon their *hay* and *stubble*, And to call men from *judging* and *despising* each other (and worse than both those) about their *meats*, and *drinks*, and *days*, to study *righteousness*, and *peace*, and *joy in the Holy Ghost*. *For he that in these things serveth Christ* (in which his Kingdom doth consist) *is acceptable to God, and approved of men* (that are wise and good). *Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edifie another*; whilest the contentious for meats will destroy the work of God, *Rom.* 14. 17, 18, 19, 20.

19,20. The *union* between *peace* and *holineſs* is ſo ſtrict, that he that truly promoteth *one* promoteth *both*, *Heb.*12. 14. *Jam.*2.17. The true way of our *union* is excellently deſcribed, *Eph.*4. 11,12,13, 14, 15, 16.

If any plain unlearned Readers ſhall blame the accurateneſs of the ſtile, they muſt remember, that thoſe perſons have not the leaſt need to hear of *heaven*, and to be drawn up from the vanities of earth who cannot digeſt a looſer ſtile.

As God hath endued the worthy Author with a more than ordinary meaſure of judiciouſneſs, even ſoundneſs and accurateneſs of underſtanding, with ſeriouſneſs, ſpirituality, and a heavenly mind; ſo we have for our common benefit, the effects of all theſe happy qualifications, in this *judicious heavenly diſcourſe*. And if my recommendations may in any meaſure, further your acceptance, improvement aud practiſing of ſo edifying a Treatiſe, it will anſwer the ends of him who waiteth with you in hope for the ſame Salvation,

Rich. Baxter.

Alton, May 30.

A Table of the Contents of the ſeveral Chapters contained in this Book.

Chap. 1. *A Procemial diſcourſe. A Reflection upon ſome foregoing verſes of the Pſalm, by way of Introduction to the Text. A conſideration of its ſomewhat various readings, and of its literal importance. A diſcuſſion of its real importance, ſo far as it is neceſſary to the ſetling the ſubject of the following diſcourſe.* pag. 1.

Chap. 2. *A ſummary propoſal of the doctrine contained in this Scripture. A diſtribution of it into three diſtinct Heads of Diſcourſe,* viz. 1. *The* qualified ſubject. 2. *The* nature. 3. *The* ſeaſon *of the Bleſſedneſs here ſpoken of. The firſt of theſe taken into conſideration, where the qualification,* Righteouſneſs, *is treated of. About which is ſhewn,* 1. *What it is.* 2. *How it qualifies.* pag. 22.

Chap. 3. *The* nature *of this Bleſſedneſs propounded unto conſideration, in the three ingredients (here mentioned) whereof it conſiſts.* 1. Viſion of Gods Face. 2. Aſſimilation to him. 3. *The*

ſatisfaction *reſulting thence. Theſe propounded to be conſidered,* 1. Abſolutely, *and ſingly each by it ſelf.* 2. Relatively, *in their mutual reſpects to each other. The firſt of theſe,* Viſion of Gods Face *diſcours'd of.* 1. *The Object.* 2. *The Act.* pag. 47.

Chap. 4. *The ſecond Ingredient into this Bleſſedneſs conſidered,* Aſſimilation to God, *or his Glory impreſt. Wherein it conſiſts, diſcovered in ſundry Propoſitions. The third Ingredient,* the ſatisfaction and pleaſure which reſults, *ſtated and opened.* pag. 67.

Chap. 5. *The* Relative *Conſideration of theſe three Ingredients of the Saints Bleſſedneſs. Where it is propounded, to ſhew particularly,* 1. *What relation* Viſion *hath to* Aſſimilation. 2. *What both theſe have to* Satisfaction. *The relation between the two former inquired into; an entrance upon the much larger Diſcourſe, what relation and influence the two former have towards the third. What* Viſion of Gods Face *or* Glory *contributes towards* ſatisfaction, *eſtimated from the conſideration,* 1. *Of the Object,* the Glory to be beheld, *as 'tis* Divine, Entire, Permanent, Appropriate.

priate. pag.86.
Chap. 6. *What* the Vision of Gods Face *contributes to the* Souls satisfaction, *estimated from the consideration of the act of* Vision *it self. Wherein this pleasure surpasses that of* sense. *A comparison pursued more at large between this* intuition *and* discourse, *between* it *and* Faith. *This intuition more absolutely considered, its Characters, and why they contribute to the satisfaction of the blessed Souls. That 'tis* (viz.) *efficacious, comprehensive, fixed, appropriative.* pag.112.
Chap.7. *Wherein* Assimilation (*the likeness or glory of God impress*) contributes unto Satisfaction. *Where is particularly propounded to be shewn, what pleasure it* involves, *what it* disposes to. *What it involves in the* esse *of it, what in the* cognosci. 1. *The pleasure of* being like God, *discovered.* 1. *Shewing concerning the* Image *of God* (*generally considered*) *that it is the Souls health and soundness restored; that it is a* vital, *an* intimate, *a* connatural, *a* perfect Image. pag.130.
Chap. 8. *The* satisfaction *carried* in the glory of God impressed, *further*

ſhewn. Certain particulars of this impreſſion inſtanc't in. A dependent frame of ſpirit, ſubjection or ſelf-devoting Love, Purity, Liberty, Tranquility. pag. 148.

Chap. 9. *The pleaſure ariſing from* knowing *or* conſidering *our ſelves to be* like *God; from conſidering it,* 1. *Abſolutely.* 2. *Comparatively, or reſpectively to the former ſtate of the Soul, To the ſtate of loſt Souls, To its pattern, To the way of accompliſhment, To the Souls own expectations, To what it ſecures. The pleaſure whereto it diſpoſes, of Union, Communion. A compariſon of this* Righteouſneſs *with this* Bleſſedneſs. pag. 175.

Chap. 10. *The* ſeaſon *of* ſatisfaction, *which is twofold, at* {Death, Reſurrection.

The former ſpoken to, wherein is ſhewn, That this life is to a Soul (even of a Saint) but as a ſleep. *That at* Death *it awakes. As to the latter, That there is a conſiderable acceſſion to its happineſs at the* Reſurrection. pag. 193.

Chap. 11. *An Introduction to the Uſe of the Doctrine hitherto propoſed. The Uſe divided into* Inferences *of Truth,* Rules *of Duty.* 1. Inference, *That* Bleſſed-

Bleſſedneſs conſiſts not in any ſenſual enjoyment. 2. The Spirit of man (*ſince it is capable of ſo high a Bleſſedneſs*) is a being of high excellency. pag. 217.

Chap. 12. Inference 3. *That* a change of heart is neceſſary to this Bleſſedneſs. *The pretences of ungodly men, whereby they would avoid the neceſſity of this change. Five conſiderations propoſed in order to the detecting the vanity of ſuch pretences. A particular diſcuſſion and refutation of thoſe pretences.* pag. 235.

Chap. 13. Infer. 4. *That* the Soul, *in which ſuch a change is wrought*, reſtleſly purſues it till it be attain'd. Infer. 5. *That* the knowing of God, *and* conformity to him, *are* ſatisfying things, *and do now in a degree ſatisfie according to the meaſure wherein they are attained.* Infer. 6. *That* the love of God towards his people is great, *that hath deſigned for them ſo great and even a ſatisfying good.* pag. 269.

Chap. 14. Infer. 7. *That ſince this Bleſſedneſs is limited to a qualified ſubject* [1 in righteouſneſs], the unrighteous are neceſſarily left excluded.

ded. Infer. 8. *That* Righteouſneſs is no vain thing, *in as much as it hath ſo happy an iſſue, and ends ſo well.* p. 284.

Chap. 15. *Two other* Inferences, *from the conſideration of the* ſeaſon *of this Bleſſedneſs. The former, That in as much as this Bleſſedneſs is not attained in this life,* The preſent happineſs of Saints muſt in a great part conſiſt in hope. *The latter, That* great is the wiſdom and ſagacity of the righteous man, *which waves a preſent temporary happineſs, and chuſes that which is diſtant and future.* pag. 301.

Chap. 16. *The ſecond general Head of the Improvement, or Uſe of the Doctrine propounded from the Text, containing certain* Rules *or Preſcriptions of Duty connatural thereto.* Rule 1 *That* we ſettle in our minds the true notion of this Bleſſedneſs. Rule 2. *That* we compare the temper of our own ſpirits with it, and labour thence to diſcern whether we may lay claim to it or no. pag. 317.

Chap. 17. Rule 3. *Directing ſuch as upon enquiry find, or ſee cauſe to ſuſpect a total averſion in themſelves to this Bleſſedneſs,* to be ſpeedy and reſtleſs in their endeavours, to have the temper

per of their ſpirits altered and made ſutable to it. *Doubts and Objections concerning the uſe of ſuch endeavours, in ſuch a caſe anſwered. Some conſiderations to enforce this direction propounded and preſſed.* . pag. 344.

Chap. 18. Rule 4. *Directing to* the endeavour of a gradual improvement in ſuch a diſpoſedneſs of ſpirit (*as ſhall be found in any meaſure already attained*) towards this Bleſſedneſs. *That 'tis Bleſſedneſs begun, which diſpoſes to the conſummate ſtate of it. That we are therefore to endeavour the daily increaſe of our preſent knowledg of God, conformity to him, and the ſatisfiedneſs of our ſpirits therein.* pag. 378.

Chap. 19. Rule 5. *Directing* to raiſe our deſires above the actual or poſſible attainments of this our preſent, and terminate them upon the future conſummate ſtate of Bleſſedneſs. *The* Rule *explained, and preſſed by ſundry conſiderations.* Rule 6. *That we add to a deſirous purſuit*, *a* joyful expectation of this Bleſſedneſs; *which is purſued in certain ſubordinate directions.* pag. 421.

Chap. 20. *The addition of two* Rules *that*

that more ſpecially reſpect the yet future *ſeaſon of this Bleſſedneſs*, after this life, *viz.* Rule 7. *That* we patiently wait for it until Death. Rule 8. *That* we love not too much this preſent life. pag. 458.

THE

PSAL. xvij. xv.

As for me, I will behold thy face in righteouſneſs: I ſhall be ſatisfied, when I awake, with thy likeneſs.

CHAP. I.

A Proemial Diſcourſe. A reflection upon ſome foregoing Verſes of the Pſalm, by way of Introduction to the Text. A Conſideration of its ſomewhat various readings, and of its literal importance. A diſcuſſion of its real importance, ſo far as is neceſſary to the ſetling the Subject of the preſent Diſcourſe.

THE continual mixture of Good and Evil in this preſent ſtate of things, with its uncertain fluctuations, and ſubjection to perpetual changes; do naturally prompt a conſider-ing mind to the belief and hope of *another*, that may be both more perfect, and

more permanent. For certainly it could never be a deſign adequate (or any way agreeable) to the Divine Wiſdom and Goodneſs, that the bleſſed God ſhould raiſe ſuch a thing as this lower Creation out of nothing, only to give himſelf the temporary pleaſure of beholding the alternate Joys and Sorrows of (the beſt part thereof) his Reaſonable Creature ſeated in it: Nor a delight at all proportionable to an eternally happy Being, when he hath connaturalliz'd ſuch a Creature to this ſenſible World; only to take notice how variouſly the paſſions he hath planted in him, may be mov'd and ſtirr'd by the variety of occaſions which he ſhall thence be preſented with; and what ſudden and contrary impreſſions may be made upon his caſie paſſive ſenſes, by the interchanged ſtrokes and touches of contrary objects: How quickly he can raiſe him into a tranſport of high contentment and pleaſure, and then how ſoon he can again reduce him to a very Paroxyſm of anguiſh and deſpair. It would diſcover us to have very vile and low thoughts of God, if we did not judg it altogether unanſwerable to his Perfections, to deſign no further thing in creating this World, and placing ſuch a Creature as Man in it, than only to pleaſe himſelf for a while with ſuch a ſpectacle, and then at laſt clear the Stage, and ſhut up all again in an eternal ſilent Darkneſs. If we could ſuppoſe a *man* furniſhed with ſuch *power*, he would ſurely add little to the reputation

reputation of his being *wiſe* or *good* beyond other *men*, by a deſign ſo to uſe it.

Much leſs can we think it worthy of God to *perpetuate* ſuch a ſtate of things as this, and continue a ſucceſſion of ſuch Perſons and Actions as we now behold in the world, through eternal Generations, only to perpetuate to Himſelf the ſame pleaſure in the exerciſe of his Immenſe Power upon created Natures, over which he hath ſo infinite advantage.

And indeed nothing can be more unconceivable, than that the great Creator and Author of all things, ſhould frame a Creature of ſo vaſt comprehenſion as the Spirit of man, put into it a capacity of knowing and converſing with himſelf, give it ſome proſpect of his own Glory and Bleſſedneſs, raiſe thereby, in many, boundleſs unſatisfied deſires after him, and an unexpreſſible pleaſure in the pre-conceived hope of being received into the communion of that Glory and Bleſſedneſs; and yet defeat and blaſt ſo great an Expectation, by the unſuſpected reducement of the very Subject of it again to nothing. Yea, and that he ſhould deal herein (as in that caſe he muſt) the moſt hardly with the beſt: And that ſuch Souls, whoſe meer love and devotedneſs to him, had made them abandon the pleaſures of this life, and run through whatſoever difficulties for his ſake, ſhould fare worſe than the very worſt; were, beyond all the reſt, moſt utterly unimaginable, and a thought

which *Pagan*-reaſon hath not known how to digeſt or entertain. *If* (ſaith one, and he ſpeaks the ſenſe of many another, as well as his own) *with the diſſolution of our Bodies, the eſſence of the Soul, whatſoever that be, ſhould be diſſolved too, and for ever ceaſe to be any thing; I know not how I can account them bleſſed, that never having enjoyed any good as the reward of their Virtue, have even periſhed for Virtue its ſelf.*

Εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἅμα τοῖς σώμασι διαλυομένοις καὶ τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς, ὅ τι δὴ ποτὲ ἔστιν ἐπήγνυτο συμδιαλύεσθαι, &c. *Dionyſ. Halicar. Antiq. Rom. lib.* 8.

Wherefore it is conſequent, that this preſent ſtate is only intended for trial to the ſpirits of men, in order to their attainment of a better ſtate in a better world: That is, that inaſmuch as the infinitely wiſe and bleſſed God had given being to ſuch a Creature as Man, in which both Worlds (the Material and the Immaterial) did meet; and who (in reſpect of his Earthly and Spiritual natures, had in him ſomewhat ſutable to each. And whereas this Creature had loſt (with his Intereſt) his very inclination to the Spiritual Objects, and enjoyments of the purer Immaterial World (wherein alone his true bleſſedneſs could conſiſt), ſuffered a vile depreſſion of his Spirit unto this groſs Corporeal World, and hereby brought himſelf under a neceſſity of being miſerable, his nobler part having nothing now to ſatisfie it, but what it was become unſutable and diſaffected to.

His

His Merciful Creator, being intent upon his reſtitution, thought fit not to bring it about by a ſudden and violent hand (as it were to catch him into Heaven againſt his will): but to raiſe his Spirit into its juſt Dominion and Soveraignty in him, by ſuch gradual Methods as were moſt ſutable to a rational and intelligent nature: That is, to diſcover to him, that he had ſuch a thing as Spirit about him; whence it was fallen, how low it was ſunk, to what ſtate it was yet capable to be rais'd, and what he had deſign'd and done for its happy recovery. And hence by the ſecret and powerful inſinuations of his own Light and Grace to awaken his drowſie and ſlumbering Reaſon, and encline his perverſe and wayward Will to the conſideration and choice of ſuch things as that felicity conſiſts in; which that better world can afford, and his better part enjoy.

And while he propounds ſuch things to him, how reaſonable and agreeable was it, that he ſhould keep him ſometime under a juſt probation (yea, how much was there in it of a gracious and compaſſionate Indulgence, often to renew the trial?) whether he would yet beſtir himſelf, and (having ſo great hopes before him, and ſuch helps and aids afforded him, and ready to be afforded) apply, at laſt, his intellectual and elective powers, to mind and cloſe with ſo gracious overtures, in order to his own eternal advancement and bleſſedneſs.

Nor was it an unreaſonable expectation that he ſhould do ſo. For, however the temporal good and evil that may conſtantly affect his ſenſitive part and powers, be preſent and near; but the eternal miſery or bleſſedneſs of his Soul, future and remote: Yet inaſmuch as he is capable of underſtanding the vaſt diſproportions of *Time* and *Eternity*; of a mortal Fleſh, and an immortal Spirit: How prepoſterous a courſe were it, and unworthy of a man; yea, how diſhonourable and reproachful to his Maker, ſhould he prefer the momentary pleaſures of narrow incapacious ſenſe, to the everlaſting enjoyments of an enlarged comprehenſive Spirit? Or, for the avoiding the pains and miſeries of the former kind, incur thoſe of the later?

Whence alſo, the Holy God doth not expect and require only, that men ſhould make that wiſer choice; but doth moſt juſtly lay the weight of their eternal ſtates upon their doing, or not doing ſo. And in that day when he ſhall *render to every one according to their works*, make this the Rule of his final judgment, To *allot to them, who by a patient continuance in well doing, ſeek for honour, glory, and immortality, eternal life.* To the reſt, *indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguiſh*, &c. *and that whether they be Jews or Gentiles.*

Rom. 2. 6,7,8,9.

Nor is it a new thing in the world, that ſome among the children of men ſhould in this comply with the righteous will of God, and

and ſo judg and chuſe for themſelves, as he is pleaſed to direct and preſcribe. 'Tis a courſe approved by the concurrent ſuffrage of all them, in all times and ages, into whoſe minds the true light hath ſhined, and whom God hath inſpired with that wiſdom whereby he maketh wiſe to ſalvation.

That numerous Aſſembly of the perfected Spirits of the Juſt, have agreed in this common reſolution; and did in their ſeveral generations, ere they had paſt this ſtate of trial, with an Heroick magnanimity trample this preſent World under their feet, and aſpire to the glory of the World to come; relieving themſelves againſt all the grievances they have *ſuffered* from ſuch whoſe portion is in *this life*, with the alone hope and confidence of what they were to *enjoy* in *another*.

And hereof we have an eminent and illuſtrious inſtance in this Context, where the ground is laid of the following Diſcourſe. For introduction whereto, obſerve that

The Title ſpeaks the Pſalm a Prayer of *David*. The matter of the Prayer is, preſervation from his Enemies. Not to go over the whole Pſalm, we have in the 13 and 14 verſes, the ſum of his deſires, with a deſcription of the perſons he prays to be delivered from: In which Deſcription every Character is an Argument to enforce his prayer.

From the Wicked] *q. d.* They are equally enemies to thee and me; not more oppoſite

to *me* by their *cruelty*, than by their *wickedneſs* they are to *thee*. Vindicate then, at once, thy ſelf, and deliver me.

Thy ſword, thy hand] Thou canſt as eaſily command and manage them, as a man may wield his ſword, or move his hand. Wilt thou ſuffer thine own ſword, thine own hand, to deſtroy thine own Servant?

Men of the world, which have their portion in this life] Time, and this lower world, bound all their hopes and fears; They have no ſerious believing apprehenſions of any thing beyond this preſent life; therefore have nothing to with-hold them from the moſt injurious violence, if thou with-hold them not; (*Men that believe not another world, are the ready Actors of any imaginable miſchiefs and tragedies in this*).

Whoſe belly thou fillest] *i.e.* Their ſenſual appetite: As oftentimes that term is uſed.

† Rom. 16. 18. Phil. 3. 19. * *With thy hid treaſures*] *viz.* the Riches which either God is wont to hide in the bowels of the earth, or lock up in the Repoſitory of Providence, diſpenſing them at his own pleaſure.

They are full of Children] So it appears by that which follows, it ought to be read, and not according to that groſs * (but eaſie) miſtake of ſome Tranſcribers of the Seventy.

* υἱῶν for ὑῶν.

As if in all this he had pleaded thus: Lord, thou haſt abundantly indulged thoſe men already, what need they more? They have

have *themſelves*, from *thy* unregarded bounty, their own vaſt ſwoln deſires ſufficiently filled, enough for their own time; and when they can live no longer in their Perſons, they may in their Poſterity, and leave not Strangers, but their numerous Off-ſpring, their Heirs. Is it not enough that their *avarice* be gratified, except their *malice* be alſo? That they have whatſoever they can conceive deſirable for themſelves, unleſs they may alſo infer what ever they can think miſchievous on me?

To this deſcription of his enemies, he *ex oppoſito*, ſubjoins ſome account of himſelf in this his cloſure of the Pſalm: *As for me*] Here he is at his ſtatique point; and, after ſome appearing diſcompoſure, his ſpirit returns to a conſiſtency, in conſideration of his own more happy ſtate, which he oppoſes and prefers to theirs in the following reſpects.

That *they* were wicked, *he* righteous. *I will behold thy face* in righteouſneſs]. That *their* happineſs was worldly, terrene, ſuch only as did ſpring from the earth; *His* heavenly and divine, ſuch as ſhould reſult from *the Face and Image of God*. *Theirs* preſent, temporary, compaſt within this life; *His*, future, everlaſting, to be enjoyed when he ſhould *awake*. *Theirs* partial, defective, ſuch as would but gratifie their beſtial part, fill their bellies; *His* adequate, compleat (the εὐδαιμονία τοῦ σωθέτου), ſuch as ſhould ſatisfie the *Man*. *I ſhall be ſatisfied*, &c.

The

אני בצדק
אחזה פניך
אשבעה
בהקיץ
תמונתך

Sept. Ἐγὼ δὲ ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ ὀφθήσομαι, τῇ προσώπῳ σου χορτασθήσομαι ἐν τῷ ὀφθῆναι τὴν δόξαν σου.

The Vulgar Latin, *Ego autem in juſtitiâ apparebo conſpectui tuo, ſatiabor cum apparuerit gloria tua.* Exactly following the Seventy, as doth the *Ethiopick*. The *Chaldee* Paraphraſe diſagrees little; the *Arabick* leſs; the *Syriack* miſtook it ſeems תמונה for אמונה, and ſo read that word *faith* which we read *likeneſs*.

The variety in rendring this Verſe (to be ſeen by comparing the Original and Tranſlations noted in the Margent) need not give us any trouble, the differences not being of great moment, nor our own reading liable to exception. The word תמונה about which is the greateſt diverſity, hath the ſignificancy we here give it, in the ſecond Commandment, and conſtantly elſewhere. And then, what more proper *Engliſh* can this Text be capable of, than it hath in our Bibles? Each word hath its true and genuine import; and the Syntax is ſufficiently regular, and grammatical of the whole.

Only as to the former, that uſual and obvious obſervation muſt here have place; that the ב prefixed to צדק, and which, with it, we read [*in righteouſneſs*], doth often ſignifie among its various acceptations, *by* or *through*; and that, not only as denoting inſtrumentality; but more at large, the place of any *medium* neceſſary to the attainment of the end it ſubſerves to; whence the ſame uſe of the *Greek* ἐν, that anſwers thereunto, is wont to go for an *Hebraiſm*.

And

And as to the latter, the only thing liable to controverſie, is, whether the Gerund בהקיצי is to be conſtrued with the *perſon ſpeaking* [*when I awake*], or [*in my awaking*]; or with the *thing*, the likeneſs or image *ſpoken of* [*in the awaking of thine image*], or [*when thine image ſhall awake*]: and I conceive we need not diſcuſs it, but following our own Tranſlation, leave the judgment of it to the ear it ſelf, which (as *Elihu* tells us) trieth words.

Hieronymus (juxta Hebr.) reads the words exactly as we do: *Ego in juſtitiâ videbo faciem tuam, implebor, cum evigilavero, ſimilitudine tuâ.*

In the mean time, the *real* importance of this Scripture more calls for diſcuſſion than the *literal*; concerning which, a threefold enquiry will be neceſſary for the ſetling the Subject of the following Diſcourſe.

1. What relation this [*righteouſneſs*] muſt be underſtood to have to the Viſion of God's face, and the other conſequent bleſſedneſs.
2. What *time* or ſtate [*awaking*] refers to.
3. What is intended by the [*likeneſs of God.*]

To the firſt, It is only neceſſary to ſay at preſent, That the already noted import of the Prepoſition [*in*] being ſuppoſed moſt ב בצדק *ſeems beſt to be rendered here* [*by or through righteouſneſs*], as by the condition in which he may expect the return of God's Mercies here, or the eternal viſion of him hereafter, &c. So the Learned Dr. *Hammond*, *Annot. in loc.* quoting alſo *Caſtellio* to the ſame purpoſe.

ſutable

ſutable to this Text (as apparently it is), *Righteouſneſs* muſt be lookt upon in reference to this *viſion*, not as in an *idle* or *meerly caſual concomitancy*, or as an unconcern'd circumſtance, that hath nothing to do with the buſineſs ſpoken of, but as in a *cloſe* and *intimate connexion* therewith; being, 1. Antecedent, 2. Conducible, 3. Neceſſary thereto. Nor can I better expreſs its place, and reference to it, *generally and in one word*, than in ſaying it *qualifies* for it; which how it doth, will be more proper to conſider hereafter. It may now ſuffice to ſay, thoſe words give us the *qualified ſubject of this bleſſedneſs* [I in righteouſneſs], A righteous perſon as ſuch.

2. *To the Second*; Taking it for granted, that none will underſtand this *awaking* as oppoſed to natural *ſleep*: In the borrowed or tropical ſenſe, it muſt be underſtood to intend either *ſome better ſtate in this life*, in compariſon whereof the *Pſalmiſt* reckons his preſent ſtate but as a ſleep; or the future ſtate of bleſſedneſs in the other life. There have been ſome who have underſtood it of the former, and thought the *Pſalmiſt* to ſpeak only of an hoped freedom from his preſent temporal afflictions; but then, that which will be imply'd, ſeems not ſo ſpecious; that trouble and affliction ſhould be ſignified by the neceſſarily preſuppoſed *ſleep*, which ſure doth more reſemble *reſt* than *trouble*.

I conceive it leſs exceptionable to refer [awaking] *to the bleſſed ſtate of Saints after this life*. For, That

That Saints, at that *time when* this was writ, had the knowledg of ſuch a ſtate (indeed a *Saint not believing a life to come*, is a perfect contradiction) no doubt can be made by any that hath ever ſo little read and compared the Old and New Teſtament. We are plainly told, that thoſe excellent perſons mentioned in that famous Roll *, liv'd by that faith, *which was the ſubſtance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not ſeen.* That of them, *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, while they lived in *Canaan*, yet *ſought a better, an heavenly country: Confeſſing themſelves pilgrims and ſtrangers on earth.* We know it was the more general belief of the *Jews* in our Saviour's time. And whence ſhould they have it, but from the Old Teſtament? Thither our Saviour remits them to ſearch it out, and the way to it. The Apoſtle Saint *Paul* gives it as the common faith of the Twelve Tribes, grounded upon the promiſe made to their forefathers; and thence *prudentially* he herein ſtates the Cauſe wherein he was *now* engag'd; ſuppoſing it would be generally reſented, that he ſhould be call'd in queſtion for avowing (only) ſo known and received a truth. Sure they were beholden to theſe Sacred Writings they had then among them, for ſo common a belief; and ſince it is out of queſtion, from our Saviour's expreſs words, they do contain the ground of that belief; what cauſe have we to be ſo ſhy of ſo interpreting Scriptures that have a fair aſpect that way?

Heb. 11. ver. 1. 9. 13. 14. 15. 16.

Joh. 5. 39. Act. 16. & 6, 7, *compared with the* 8.

Is

Is it, that we can deviſe to faſten here and there another *ſenſe* upon divers ſuch? I wonder what one Text can be mentioned in all the Old Teſtament to this purpoſe, wherein one may not do ſo: And what then would be the tendency of this courſe, but to deny in *all the particulars*, what, upon ſo clear evidence, we are *in the general* forced to admit? and to put *Moſes*, and *Abraham*, and *David*, in a lower Claſs than *Pythagoras*, and *Socrates*, and *Plato*?

And I think it would not be eaſie to find one Text in all that part of the Bible, where both the words thereof, and the Context, do more fairly comply, than in this, ſo as not only to admit, but even to invite that interpretation.

For the term [*awake*], about which the preſent enquiry is, How apt and obvious is the analogy between our awaking out of natural ſleep, and the holy ſoul's riſing up out of the darkneſs and torpor of its preſent ſtate, into the enlivening light of God's preſence? It is *truly* ſaid ſo to *awake*, at its firſt quitting theſe darkſom Regions, *when* it lays aſide its cumberſom night-vail. It doth ſo, more perfectly, in the joyful morning of the Reſurrection-day, when mortality is ſwallowed up in life, and all the yet-hovering ſhadows of it are vaniſhed and fled away. And how known and uſual an application this is of the metaphorical terms of *ſleeping* and *awaking* in Holy Writ, I need not tell them who have read the

the Bible. Nor doth this interpretation leſs fitly accord to the other contents of this verſe: For to what ſtate do the *ſight of Gods face*, and *ſatisfaction with his likeneſs*, ſo fully agree, as to that of future bleſſedneſs in the other world.

But then the contexture of diſcourſe in this and the fore-going verſe together, ſeems plainly to determine us to this ſenſe: For what can be more conſpicuous in them, than a purpoſed compariſon and oppoſition of two ſtates of Felicity mutually each to other? *That of the wicked*, whom he calls *men of time* (as the words are rendred by * one, and do literally ſignifie) and *whoſe portion*, he tells us, *is in this life*; and *the righteous man's*, his own; which he expected not to be till he ſhould awake, *i. e.* not till *after this life*.

מתים מחלד

* *Homines detempore.* Pagnin.

Thirdly, It is further to be enquired, How we are here to underſtand [*the likeneſs of God*]. I doubt not but we are to underſtand by it, *his glory*. And the only difficulty which it will be neceſſary at preſent to conſider about it, is, Whether we are to take it *objectively*, or *ſubjectively*; for the glory to be *repreſented* to the bleſſed ſoul, or the glory to be *impreſt* upon it; the glory which it is to *behold*, or the glory it ſhall *bear*. And I conceive the difference is more eaſily capable of *accommodation*, than of a ſtrict *deciſion* on either part.

By [*face*] is undoubtedly meant *objective glory*, and that in its moſt perfect repreſentation

preſentation (the face being, as we know with men, the chief ſeat of aſpectable Majeſty and Beauty). Hence when *Moſes* deſires to ſee God's glory, though he did vouchſafe ſome diſcovery of it, yet he tells him his *face* cannot be ſeen. Hereupon, therefore, the next expreſſion [*thy likeneſs*] might the more plauſibly be reſtrained to *ſubjective glory*, ſo as to denote the Image of God now in its moſt perfect impreſſion on the bleſſed ſoul.

But that I inſiſt not on: Suppoſing therefore, that what is ſignified by [*face*], be repeated over again in this word [*likeneſs*], yet I conceive the expreſſion is not varied in vain; but having more to ſay than only that he expected a ſtate of future *Viſion*, *viz.* that he aſſured himſelf of *ſatisfaction* too, another word was thought fit to be uſed that might ſignifie alſo *ſomewhat* that muſt intervene in order to that ſatisfaction. 'Tis certain the meer objective repreſentation and conſequent intuition of the moſt excellent (even the Divine) glory, cannot ſatisfie a ſoul remaining diſaffected and unſuitable thereunto. It can only ſatisfie, as, *being repreſented*, it forms the ſoul into the ſame image, and attempers it to it ſelf, *q. d.* I expect hereafter to ſee the bleſſed Face of God, and to be my ſelf bleſſed or ſatisfied by his Glory, at once appearing to me, and transfuſing it ſelf upon me. In ſhort therefore, I underſtand by that term, *the glory of God as transforming*, or *as impreſſive of it ſelf*. If therefore, *Glory the Object*

of

of the Soul's Vision, shall by any be thought to be intended in it, I contend not; supposing only, that the *Object* be taken not *materially*, or *potentially* only, for the thing visible in it self considered; but *formally*, and *in esse actuali objecti*; that is, as now *actually impressing it self*, or as connoting such an impression upon the beholding soul; for so only is it productive of such a pleasure and *satisfaction* to it, as must ensue. As in this form of speech [*such a man takes pleasure in knowledg*,] it is evident *knowledg* must be taken there both *objectively*, for the things known; and *subjectively*, for the actual perception of those things; inasmuch as, apparently, *both* must concur to work him delight. So it will appear, to any one that attentively considers it, *glory* must be taken in that passage, *We rejoyce in hope of the glory of God.* 'Tis Divine glory both *revealed* and *received*, His exhibition and communication of it, according to his *Immensity*, and our participation of it, according to our *measure*, that must concur to our eternal satisfaction. Herein the *Platonick* adage * hath evident truth in it; Pleasure is here certainly made up of something finite, and something infinite, meeting together. 'Tis not (as the Philosopher speaks) a χωρισὸν, but a ἕξις τι, not any thing separate from the soul, but something it possesses, that can make it happy. 'Tis not happy by an incommunicate happiness, nor glorious by an incommunicate glory. Indeed, the discovery

Rom. 5. 2.

* *Voluptatis generatio ait ex infiniti & finiti copulatione.*

of ſuch a glory to an inglorious unholy ſoul, muſt rather torment than ſatisfie. The future glory of Saints is therefore called *a glory to be revealed in them* (or *into them*, as the word ſignifies). And in the foregoing words, the Apoſtle aſſures Chriſt's fellow-ſufferers, that they ſhall be *glorified* together with him. Surely the notation of that word, the formal notion of glorification, cannot import ſo little as only *to be a Spectator of Glory*; it muſt ſignifie a being *made glorious*.

Rom. 8. 18 εἰς ἡμᾶς.

Nor is the common and true Maxim otherwiſe intelligible, that grace and glory differ only in degree. For certainly it could never enter into the mind of a *ſober* man (though how dangerouſly ſome ſpeak, that might poſſibly have been ſo if too much learning had not made them *mad*, will be animadverted in its place), that *objective glory*, and *grace in Saints*, were the ſame ſpecifick (much leſs the ſame numerical) thing.

'Tis true, that Scripture often expreſſes the future bleſſedneſs, by *viſion of God*. But where that phraſe is uſed to ſignifie it alone, 'tis evident (as within the lower Region of Grace, words of knowledg do often imply affection, and correſpondent impreſſions on the ſoul) it muſt be underſtood of affective transformative Viſion, ſuch as hath conformity to God moſt inſeparably conjunct with it. And, that we might underſtand ſo much, they are elſewhere both expreſly mentioned

tioned together, as joynt-ingredients into a Saints bleſſedneſs; as in thoſe words ſo full of clear and rich ſenſe: *When he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him: for we ſhall ſee him as he is.*

Which Text I take for a plain Comment upon this: and methinks it ſhould not eaſily be ſuppoſable, they ſhould both ſpeak ſo near the ſame words, and not intend the ſame ſenſe: You have in both the ſame ſeaſon, *When he ſhall appear*, *When I ſhall awake:* The ſame ſubject, the *righteous* perſon *born of God* (compare the cloſe of the former Chapter with the beginning of this), and *I in righteouſneſs:* The ſame Viſion, *We ſhall ſee him as he is*; *I ſhall behold his face:* The ſame Aſſimilation, *We ſhall be like him*, *I ſhall be ſatisfied with his likeneſs* (concerning the χάρις or habitude this Viſion and Aſſimilation mutually have to one another, there will be conſideration had in its place).

I therefore conceive neither of theſe Notions of the *Divine likeneſs*, do exclude the other. If it be enquired, which is principally meant? That needs not be determined: If the latter, it ſuppoſes the former; if the former, it infers the latter. Without the firſt, the other cannot be; without this other, the firſt cannot ſatisfie.

If any yet diſagree to this Interpretation of this Text, let them affix the Doctrine propounded from it, to that other laſt mentioned (which only hath not the expreſs mention of a conſequent ſatisfaction, as this hath)

whence therefore, as being in this reſpect fuller, my thoughts were pitch'd upon this).

Only withal let it be conſidered, how much more eaſie it is, to *imagine another* ſenſe, and ſuppoſe it poſſible, than to *diſprove* this, or evince it *impoſſible*. How far probable it is, muſt be left to the judgment of the indifferent: With whom it may not be inſignificant to add, That thus it hath been underſtood by Interpreters (I might adventure to ſay the generality) of all ſorts. However the few annexed * (for I neither apprehend the *neceſſity*, nor have the preſent *conveniency* of alledging many) will ſuffice to avoid any imputation of ſingularity or novelty.

* *Agitur de reſurrectione & Manifeſtatione gloriæ cæleſtis*, Ruffin. in loc.

Cum apparuerit gloria tua, i. e. gloria reſurrectionis. Bed. Comment. in Pſalm.

How the Jews were wont to underſtand it, may be ſeen at one view in that of *Petrus Galatinus* in loc. *Duo mi Capnio me hic per priſcos Judæorum Scripturas offendere hortaris, & generalem mortuorum reſurrectionem futuram eſſe & eam per Meſſiam factum iri, Primum itaque patet non ſolum per ſacras ſcripturæ teſtimonia verum etiam per Talmudiſtarum dicta. Nam illud quidem* Pſal. 17. *dictum Ego in juſtitiâ — &c. ſic exponunt, & preſertim Rabbi Abraham Aven Ezra & Rabbi Solomo, &c.* And ſo he goes on to recite their words, *De Arcanis Catholicæ veritatis*

Oppoſit hæc, iis quæ de impiis dixerat. Illi Sapiunt terrena Saturiantur filiis, & portionem ſuam in hâc vitâ ponunt, mihi verò contempta eſt hæc vita; ad futuram feſtino, ubi non in divitiis, ſed in juſtitiâ videbo, non terrena hæc tranſitura, ſed ipſam faciem tuam, nec ſaturabor in filiis caruis ſed cum evigilavero tuâ ſimilitudine, ſicut. 1 Joh. 3. 2. — *Cum apparuerit, &c.* Luth. in Pſal.

— *Reſurgam è mortuis — videbo te perfectiſſimè ſicut es, Similis ero tibi* Jun. & Tremel. in Pſal. 17.

Moſterus

Mollerus thinks it ought not to be reſtrained to life eternal, but faith, ſome underſtand it of the glory. *quâ ornabuntur pii in vitâ aternâ.* And adds, —*& quidem non male.* In ——*Ego vero & omnes electi tui — piè & juſtè vivimus in hoc ſæculo, ut aliquando in futuro ſæculo videamus faciem tuam, & eâ ſaciemur cum ſc. à pulvere terræ evigilaverimus & reformati futrimus ad ſimilitudinem Chriſti tui.* Seb. Munſter. in notis in loc.

——*Cum ego ad imaginem tuam conditus reſurrexero.* *Vatablus* (though he adds, *alii ad reſurrectionem non referunt*).

—*De futurâ vitâ fælicitate ait ſatiabor quum expergiſcar, i e. quum reſurgam è mortuis* —— *Similitudine tuâ, hoc eſt videbo te perfectiſſimè, ſicuti es; & Similis ero tibi quum patefactus Chriſtus gloriosâ adventu ſuo,* 1 Joh. 3. 2. Fabrit. Conc. in Pſ. 17. ult.

Deſcribit his verbis Pſalmographus beatitudinem æternam filiorum Dei. Geſnerus in loc.

CHAP. II.

A ſummary Propoſal of the Doctrine contained in this Scripture. A diſtribution of it into three diſtinct Heads of Diſcourſe, viz. 1. *The qualified Subject.* 2. *The Nature.* 3. *The Seaſon of the Bleſſedneſs here ſpoken of. The firſt of theſe taken into conſideration, where the qualification* [Righteouſneſs] *is treated of. About which is ſhewn,* 1. *What it is.* 2. *How it qualifies.*

NOW the foregoing ſenſe of the words being ſuppoſed, it appears that the proper Argument of this Scripture is, *The bleſſedneſs of the righteous in the other life, conſiſting in the viſion and participation of the Divine glory, with the ſatisfaction that reſulteth thence.*

In which ſummary account of the Doctrine here contained, Three general Heads of Diſcourſe offer themſelves to our view.

The { Subject / Nature / Seaſon } of this Bleſſedneſs.

Or to whom it belongs, wherein it conſiſts, and when it ſhall be enjoyed.

Firſt then, we begin with the conſideration of the ſubject, unto whom this bleſſedneſs appertains. And we find it expreſt in the Text, in theſe only words [*I*, *in righteouſneſs*]; which amounts to as much as *A righteous perſon as ſuch.* They repreſent to us the ſubject of this Bleſſedneſs in its proper qualification: Wherein, our buſineſs is to conſider his qualification [*Righteouſneſs*], under which notion only he is concerned in the preſent Diſcourſe; And about which, two things are to be enquired: 1.

What it imports.
How it qualifies.

Firſt, What it imports. I take *Righteouſneſs* here to be oppoſed to *Wickedneſs* in the foregoing verſe (as was intimated before); and ſo underſtand it in an equal latitude, not of *particular*, but of *univerſal righteouſneſs*: That is, not that particular Virtue which enclines men to *give* every one their right (unleſs in that *every one*, you *would* include alſo the bleſſed God himſelf, the Soveraign common Lord of all), but an univerſal rectitude of heart and life, comprehending not only equity towards men, but piety towards God alſo. A *conformity* to the Law in general, in its *utmoſt* extent, adequately oppoſite to [illegible] (which is indeed of larger extent than 1.

wickedneſs; and in what different reſpects *Righteouſneſs* is commenſurate to the one and the other, we ſhall ſee by and by) as that is, *generally*, ſaid to be ἀνομία, *a tranſgreſſion of the Law.*

1 Joh. 3. 4

Ἐν δὲ δικαιοσύνῃ συλλαβὼν πᾶσ' ἀρετὴ ἔστι

Among Moraliſts, ſuch a comprehenſive Notion of *Righteouſneſs* as is inclusive of all other Virtues, is not unknown. But in Scripture it is its much more ordinary acceptation. To give inſtances, were to ſuppoſe too much ignorance in the Reader; and to enumerate the paſſages in which this term is taken in that extenſive ſenſe, were too great an unneceſſary burden to the Writer. It were indeed to tranſcribe a great part of the Bible. How familiar is the oppoſition of *righteous* and *wicked*, and *righteous* and *ſinner*, in ſacred Language! And how fully co-extent *righteouſneſs* is, in the Scripture-notion of it, to the whole Law of God, that one paſſage ſufficiently diſcovers; where 'tis ſaid of *Zacharias* and *Elizabeth*, that they were both *righteous* before God, walking *in all the commandments* and *ordinances* of the Lord blameleſs.

Luke 1. 5, 6.

'Tis true indeed, that when the words *godlineſs* or *holineſs* are in conjunction with this term, its ſignificancy is divided and ſhared with them, ſo as that *they* ſignifie, in that caſe, *conformity to the will of God* in the duties of the *firſt* Table, and *this* is confined to thoſe of the *ſecond:* Otherwiſe, being put alone, it ſignifies the *whole duty of man*, as the other expreſſions alſo do in the

ſame

ſame caſe, eſpecially the later of them.

As it ſeems not to be within the preſent deſign of the Context to take notice of any *imputed wickedneſs* of the oppoſite ſort of perſons, other than what was *really in them*, and whereby they might be fitly characterized: ſo, I conceive, that *imputed righteouſneſs* is not here meant, that is inherent in the perſon of the Mediator; but that which is truly ſubjected in a Child of God, and deſcriptive of him. Nor muſt any think it ſtrange, that all the requiſites to our Salvation, are not found together in one Text of Scripture. The righteouſneſs of Him, whom we are to adore as made *ſin* for us, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him; hath a much higher ſphere peculiar and appropriate to it ſelf. *This* of which we now ſpeak, in its own inferior and ſubordinate place, is neceſſary alſo to be (both had and) underſtood.

It muſt be underſtood by viewing it in its Rule, in conformity whereto it ſtands; which muſt needs be ſome Law of God. There hath been a twofold Law given by God to Mankind, as the meaſure of an *univerſal* Righteouſneſs, the one made for *innocent*, the *other* for *lapſed* man; which are diſtinguiſhed by the Apoſtle under the names of the *Law of works*, and the *Law of faith*. It can never be poſſible, that any of the Apoſtate ſons of *Adam* ſhould be denominated Righteous by the former of theſe Laws, the Righteouſneſs thereof conſiſting in a perfect and ſinleſs obedience. Rom. 3. 27

The

The latter therefore is the only meaſure and rule of this Righteouſneſs, *viz.* the *Law of Faith*; or that part of the Goſpel-revelation which contains and diſcovers our duty, what we are to be and do in order to our Bleſſedneſs; being, as to the matter of it, the whole Moral Law, before appertaining to the Covenant of Works, attempered to the ſtate of faln ſinners, by Evangelical mitigations and indulgence, by the ſuper-added precepts of Repentance and Faith in a Mediator, with all the other duty reſpecting the Mediator, as ſuch; and cloathed with a new form as it is *now* taken into the conſtitution of the Covenant of Grace.

This Rule, though it be in the whole of it capable of coming under one common Notion, *as being the ſtanding obliging Law of Chriſt's Mediatory Kingdom*; yet according to the different matter of it, its obligations and annexed ſanctions are different.

As to its matter, it muſt be underſtood to require

1. The meer being and ſincerity of thoſe gracious principles, with their eſſential Acts (as there is opportunity) expreſſed therein, in oppoſition to the nullity and inſincerity of them.

2. All the poſſible degrees and improvements of ſuch Principles and Acts, in oppoſition to any the leaſt failure or defect. *In the former reſpect*, it meaſures the very eſſence of this Righteouſneſs, and enjoins what concerns the *being* of the righteous man as ſuch.

In

In the latter, it meaſures all the ſuper-added degrees of this Righteouſneſs (which relations, where they have a mutable foundation, admit), enjoining what concerns the perfection of the righteous man. *In the former reſpect*, *Righteouſneſs* is oppoſed to *Wickedneſs*, as in that of the *Pſalmiſt*, *I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God---therefore hath the Lord recompenced me according to my righteouſneſs.* Pſa.18.21 Ver. 24.
In the latter to *ſin*, with which the Apoſtle makes unrighteouſneſs co-extent, in theſe words, *If we ſay we have no ſin, we deceive our ſelves*, &c. *If we confeſs our ſins, he is faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins, and to cleanſe us from all unrighteouſneſs.*

Accordingly are its ſanctions divers. For wherein it enjoins the former of theſe, *the eſſence of this righteouſneſs*, in oppoſition to a total abſence thereof, it is conſtitutive of the terms of ſalvation, and *obligeth* under the penalty of eternal death. So are *faith*, *repentance*, *love*, *ſubjection*, &c. required: *If ye believe not that I am he, ye ſhall dye in your ſins. He that believeth not, is condemned already. ---The wrath of God abideth on him. ---If ye repent not, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh. Repent, that your ſins may be blotted out. ---Him hath God exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance and remiſſion of ſins. If any man love not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, let him be Anathema Maran-atha. He that loveth Father or Mother more than me, is not worthy of me*, &c. *If any man come to me, and hate* Joh.8.24. c.3.18. 36. Lu.13.3.5 Act.3.19. c.5.31 1 Cor.16. 22. Mat.10.37 Lu.14.26

hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and ſiſters, yea, and his own life alſo (that is, as the former Scripture expounds this, *loves them not leſs than me*), *he cannot be my diſciple* (*i. e.* while he remains in that temper of mind he now is of, he muſt needs be wholly unrelated unto me, and uncapable of benefit by me, as well as he is indocible, and not ſuſceptible of my further inſtructions, neither capable of the precepts or priviledges belonging to Diſcipleſhip). *He is the author of eternal ſalvation to all them that obey him*, and *will come in flaming fire to take vengeance of thoſe that know not God, and obey not his Goſpel; who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord*, &c. Where it is only the ſincerity of thoſe ſeveral requiſites, that is under ſo ſevere penalty exacted and called for; inaſmuch as he that is ſincerely a Believer, a Penitent, a lover of God or Chriſt, an obedient Subject, is not capable of the contrary denomination, and therefore not liable, according to the tenour of this Law, to be puniſhed as an Infidel, an impenitent perſon, an Enemy, a Rebel.

Heb. 5. 9. 2 Theſ. 1. 8, 9, &c.

When it enjoins the latter, *viz.* all the ſubſequent duty, through the whole courſe whereof the already ſincere ſoul muſt be tending towards perfection; though it bind not thereto under pain of damnation, further than as ſuch neglects and miſcarriages, may be ſo groſs and continued, as not to conſiſt with ſincerity: Yet ſuch injunctions are

not

not wholly without penalty; but here it obliges, under leſs penalties, the hiding of God's face, and other paternal ſeverities and caſtigations. They that thus only offend, *are chaſtened of the Lord, that they may not be condemned with the world. Their iniquity is viſited with the rod, and their tranſgreſſion with ſtripes, though loving-kindneſs be not taken away*—— Yea, and while they are ſhort of perfect holineſs, their bleſſedneſs is imperfect alſo; which is to be acknowledged a very grievous penalty, but unconceivably ſhort of what befalls them that are *ſimply unrighteous*. That it obliges thus diverſly, is evident; for it doth not adjudg unto eternal death without remedy, for the leaſt defect; for then what other Law ſhould relieve againſt the ſentence of this? or wherein were this a relieving Law? Yet doth it require perfection, that we *perfect holineſs in the fear of God*; that we *be perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect*. And otherwiſe, did it bind to no other duty than what it makes ſimply neceſſary to ſalvation; the defects and miſcarriages that conſiſt with ſincerity, were no ſins, not being provided againſt by any Law that is of preſent obligation (unleſs we will have the *Law of Nature* to ſtand by it ſelf as a diſtinct Law, both from *that of Works*, and *of Grace*; which is not neceſſary; but as it did at firſt belong to the former, ſo it doth now to the latter, as ſhall further be ſhewn by and by). For to ſuppoſe the Law of Works in its own proper form and tenour, to be ſtill obliging,

1 Cor. 11. Pſal. 89.

2 Cor. 7. 1. Mat. 5.

ging, is to ſuppoſe all under hopeleſs condemnation, inaſmuch as all have ſinned. And beſides, it ſhould oblige to caſt off all regard to Chriſt, and to ſeek bleſſedneſs without him; yea, and it ſhould oblige to a natural impoſſibility, to a contradiction, to make that not to have been, which hath been; a ſinner to ſeek happineſs by never having ſinned. It cannot therefore intirely, in its own form, as it was at firſt made and laid upon man, be of preſent and continuing obligation to him. But in what part and reſpect it is, or is not, comes now more diſtinctly to be ſhewn. Here know, the Law of Nature, with fit Additionals, became one formed Conſtitution; which being violated by the Apoſtaſie, became unuſeful to the End it was made for, the containing of man within the bounds of ſuch duty as ſhould be conjunct with his bleſſedneſs. Therefore was the new Conſtitution of the Law of Grace made and ſetled, which alters, adds to, takes from it, relaxes, or re-enforces it, according as the matter of it, the exigencie of man's caſe, and God's gracious purpoſe and deſign could admit, and did require.

For the Promiſe (imply'd in the Threatning) it ceaſed; ſin having diſobliged the Promiſer.

For the Precept. The expreſſed poſitive
1 Tim. 4. part is plainly abrogate*. For the natural
4. part: As it was not neceſſary, ſo nor was it poſſible it ſhould be ſo; its foundations being more ſtable than Heaven and Earth.

For

For the Commination, we muſt underſtand two things in it: First, That for every tranſgreſſion, a proportionable puniſhment muſt become due. Secondly, That this debt be in event exacted: or, that God do actually inflict the deſerved penalty entirely and fully upon the offending-perſon.

The former of theſe is in the ſtricteſt and moſt proper ſenſe natural, and therefore alſo unalterable. This duneſs ariſing immediately from the relation of a Reaſonable creature offending, to his Maker. Whence alſo it is diſcernable to meer natural light. Pagans are ſaid (*Rom.*1.32.) *to have known the righteous judgment of God, that they who commit ſuch things* (as are there mention'd) *are worthy of death.* And hence was the mention and dread of a *Nemeſis*, and an Ἐκδικον ὄμμα (a vindictive Deity, and a revengeful eye over them) ſo frequent with them. "If *De Satisf.* "therefore (as the Learned *Grotius* ſpeaks) *cap.* 3. "there had never been a penal Law; yet an "human act, having in it ſelf a pravity, "whether intrinſecal, from the immutable "nature of the thing; or even extrinſecal, "from the contrary command of God, had "deſerved puniſhment, and that very grievous. Now what an arbitrary Conſtitution did not create, it could not nullifie; but might add ſtrength, and give a confirmation to it.

But now for the latter, *That this debt be entirely and fully exacted of the ſinner himſelf*; though that be alſo natural, yet not in the ſtricteſt and moſt proper ſenſe, *i. e.* It is convenient

venient and agreeable to the nature of the thing; not what it doth ſo neceſſarily require, that it can upon no terms be diſpens'd with. It is ſo natural, as that the Son inherit from his Father, which yet may, ſometimes, for juſt cauſes be ordered otherwiſe. It is what, if it were done, Juſtice could not but approve; not what it doth ſtrictly and indiſpenſably require. Or, is a debt which it might exact, but which may, without injuſtice, upon valuable conſiderations be remitted. The former of theſe, therefore, the new Conſtitution doth no way infringe or weaken, but confirm and reinforce. The latter it ſo far diſpenſes with, as that, for the ſatisfaction made by the Redeemer, the debt incurred by ſin, be remitted to the ſinner that truly repents and believes, and continues ſincerely (though imperfectly) to obey for the future.

Grot. ibid.

So that his after-delinquencies, conſiſting with ſuch ſincerity, do not actually, or in event, ſubject him to other penalties, than the paternal rebukes and chaſtenings before mentioned. But this latter part conſiderable in the Commination, *The determination of the full penalty to the very perſon of the tranſgreſſor:* It doth not diſpenſe with to others (*i.e.* of the adult, and of perſons in a preſent natural poſſibility of underſtanding the Law-giver's pleaſure herein) than ſuch before deſcribed; but ſays expreſly, *He that believeth not the Son, ſhall not ſee life, but the wrath of God abideth on him:* That *indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguiſh, ſhall be upon every*

Joh. 3. 36. Rom. 2. 8, 9.

every ſoul of man that doth evil——

Therefore the morally-preceptive part of the Law of Works, is not in force *as man's rule of duty*, conſidered *in conjunction with the promiſe*: That is, it doth not now ſay to any man, *Do this* (*i. e.* perfectly obey without ever having ſinned) *that thou mayeſt live* (Both which he was obliged to eye conjunctly; the former, as containing the *Rule*; the other the *End*, in part, of his obedience). But it is in force (even by the new Conſtitution it ſelf) as *God's Rule of Judgment* (conſidered *in conjunction with the commination*) upon all whom the Law of Grace relieves not, as not coming up to the terms of it; whom alſo this ſupervening Law brings under a ſupervening aggravated condemnation. For where the obligation to obedience is violated, the obligation to puniſhment naturally takes place. We ſee then how far the Law of Works is in force, and how far not.

But that ſo far as it is in force, it is to be looked on as taken into the New Conſtitution of the Law of Grace, is evident. For it is now modifi'd, and hath received a new mould and ſtamp by this Law: Which is now become (ſo far as it is promulgate) the ſtanding Rule of Government over the lapſed World. The principal modifying act herein, is *Diſpenſation*. Now this, 'tis true, may be ſo underſtood, or may be taken in ſuch a ſenſe, as wherein it will only belong to the executive part of Government; that is, when it is not

the act of the ſame Power that made the Law: As where only the execution of a deſerved penalty is diſpens't with, which may be done, in ſome caſes, by a Judg, that is only a Miniſter of the Law, and not the Maker of it; being (as may be ſuppoſed) enabled thereto by that Law it ſelf, or by an Authority annexed to his Office; or by virtue of inſtructions, which leave to him ſome latitude of managing the Affairs of his Judicature in a diſcretionary way, as preſent occaſions ſhall dictate. And yet by none of theſe would any change be made in the Law; but this is Diſpenſation in a leſs proper ſenſe.

In the proper and more famous ſenſe, Diſpenſation belongs to the Legiſlative part of Government, being the act of the ſame Power that made the former Law, now diſpens't with; and an act of the ſame kind, *viz.* Legiſlation; the making of a new Law that alters the former which it hath relation to: Whence it is wont to be reckon'd among thoſe things that make a change in a Law*. And ſo the caſe is here: The former Law is diſpens't with by the making of a new one; which ſo alters and changes it in its matter and frame, and more immediate End, as hath been ſhewn: And a changed Law is not the ſame.

Vid. *Suarez de Legibus.*

Nor is it at all ſtrange, that the minatory part of the Law of Works related to the preceptive, ſo as with it to conſtitute the *debt of puniſhment*, ſhould be now within the

the compaſs of the Redeemer's Law. For by this appli'd, and urged on the Conſciences of ſinners, he performs a neceſſary preparatory part of his work for their recovery, *viz.* the awakening, the humbling them; and reducing them to a juſt and uſeful deſpair of relief and help, otherwiſe than by his merciful hand and vouchſafement; and the rendring them hereby capable of his following applications. Cutting or lancing, with other ſuch ſeverities, are as proper and uſeful a part of the Chirurgeon's buſineſs, as the applying of healing Medicines: Nor have they the ſame deſign and end for which wounds are inflicted by an Enemy, the taking away of life, but the ſaving of it. And the matter is out of doubt, that the moſt rigorous determination of the *penalty* that ſhall be underſtood *duly belonging to the leaſt ſin*, hath a place, and doth ſtand viſibly extant to view in the publiquely avow'd Declaration, and among the *Placita* or *Decretals* of the Redeemer. We there read, that Whoſoever ſhall ſay to his brother, *fool*, *ſhall be in danger of hell-fire* (yea, and that lower degrees of the ſame kind of ſin, do expoſe to lower degrees of the ſame kind of puniſhment, as our Saviour's words muſt be underſtood, if we attend the plain meaning of his alluſive and borrowed phraſe of ſpeech). Mat 5.22

That the wages of ſin is death. That as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curſe: for it is written, Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of Ro. 6.23. Gal. 3.10.

the law to do them. And we are told, that *the*
Ver. 22. *Scripture* (which is the word of Chriſt, and was written not for innocent, but lapſed man) *hath concluded all under ſin.* Where alſo we find what is the true intent and end of this rough and ſharp dealing with men, The ſhutting them up, like ſentenced Malefactors, as in order to execution (which ſeems to be the import of the word here
* συνκλεισεν. ibid. uſed *) viz. *that the promiſe by faith of Jeſus Chriſt might be given to them that believe* (or *to them believing*, as the words may be read). And moreover the Spirit, which breathes not in the Law of Works, as ſuch, but in the Law of Grace, performs that operation which belongs to it, as it hath the name of the Spirit of Bondage, by applying and binding on the ſentence of death, as due to the guilty perſon.

Therefore we muſt underſtand the Redeemer's Conſtitution to have two parts: 1. An aſſertion and eſtabliſhment of the ancient determined penalty due for every tranſgreſſion; and to be certainly inflicted on all ſuch as accept not the following offer of Mercy upon the terms preſcribed. Whereby the Honour and Juſtice of the Creator is ſalved and vindicated, in reference to that firſt Covenant made with man. And the caſe of the ſinner is plainly ſtated before him, that he may have a diſtinct and right apprehenſion of it. 2. The Grant of pardon and eternal life to thoſe that repent unfeignedly of their ſins, and turn to God; believing in the Mediator,

diator, and reſigning themſelves to his Grace and Government, to be by him conducted, and made acceptable to God in their return, and that continue ſincere herein to the end. Whereby the wonderful mercy of God in Chriſt is demonſtrated, and the Remedy is provided and aſcertained to the, otherwiſe, loſt and hopeleſs ſinner.

And theſe two parts therefore are to be look't on in this Conſtitution, though diſtinctly, yet not ſeparately. The ſinner is, at once, to conſider the ſame penalty as naturally, and by divine ſanction, due to him; but now graciouſly to be remitted: The ſame bleſſedneſs as juſtly loſt, but mercifully to be reſtored, with an high improvement. And to own both theſe jointly, as the voice of the Redeemer in his Goſpel. Death is due to thee; Bleſſedneſs forfeited by thy having ſinned: But if thou ſincerely repent, believe and obey for the future, thou art pardoned, and entitled to everlaſting life.

It therefore now appears, that as the Law or dictates of pure Nature, comprehended together with other fit additionals, became at firſt one entire Conſtitution aptly ſuited to the government of man in his innocent ſtate, unto which the Title did well agree of *the Law or Covenant of Works*: So the ſame natural dictates, tranſcribed and made expreſs (becauſe now ſullied, and not ſo legible in the corrupted nature of man), do, with ſuch allays and additions as the caſe required, compoſe and make up the Conſti-

tution which bears the title of *the Law* or *Covenant of Grace*, or the *Law of Faith*, or *the Goſpel of Chriſt*, and is only ſutable to the ſtate of man lapſed and faln; as the meaſure of that righteouſneſs which he is now to aim at, and aſpire unto.

The rule of this Righteouſneſs therefore being evidently *the Law of Faith*, the Goſpel-revelation, wherein it is preceptive of duty: This Righteouſneſs can be underſtood to be nothing but the impreſs of the Goſpel upon a man's heart and life. A conformity in Spirit and Practice to the revelation of the Will of God in Jeſus Chriſt; a collection of Graces exerting themſelves in ſutable actions and deportments towards God and man; *Chriſt formed* in the ſoul, or *put on*; the *new creature* in its *being* and *operations*; *the truth learned as it is in Jeſus, to the putting off the old man, and the putting on the new.*

More diſtinctly, we may yet ſee wherein it lies, upon a premiſed view of ſome few things neceſſary to be fore-known in order thereunto. As,

That this righteouſneſs is a *renewing righteouſneſs*, or the righteouſneſs of one formerly a ſinner, a lapſed periſhing wretch, who is by it reſtored into ſuch a ſtate towards God, as he was in before that lapſe (in reſpect of certain *great eſſentials*, though as yet his ſtate be not ſo perfectly good, while he is in his tendency and motion; And ſhall, by certain *additionals*, be unſpeakably better, when he hath attained the end and reſt he is tending to).

That

That a reaſonable Creature, yet untainted with ſin, could not but have a temper of mind ſutable to ſuch apprehenſions as theſe, *viz.* That as it was not the Author of being to it ſelf, ſo it ought not principally to ſtudy the pleaſing and ſerving of it ſelf, but Him who gave it being; that it can no more continue and perfect it ſelf unto bleſſedneſs, than it could create it ſelf; and can therefore have no expectation hereof, but from the ſame Author of its being; and hence, that it muſt reſpect and eye the great God, its Creator and Maker: as,

The { Soveraign Authority whom it was to fear and obey. / Soveraign Good whom it was to love and enjoy.

But becauſe it can perform no *duty* to him, without knowing what he will have it to *do*; nor have any particular expectation of favours from him, without knowing what he will pleaſe to *beſtow*; and is therefore obliged to attend to the revelations of his Will concerning both theſe: It is therefore neceſſary, that he eye him under a notion introductive and ſubſervient to all the operations that are to be exerted towards him, under the two former notions; *i.e.* as the *Eternal never failing Truth*, ſafely to be depended on, as intending nothing of deceit in any the revelations, whether of his *righteous Will*, concerning matter of *duty to be done*; or of his

good Will, concerning matter of *benefit to be expected and enjoyed.*

That Man did apoſtatize and revolt from God, as conſidered under theſe ſeveral notions; and returns to him, when an holy rectitude is recovered, and he again becomes righteous, conſidered under the ſame.

That it was not agreeable to God's Wiſdom, Truth, and Legal Juſtice, to treat with Man a *Sinner* in order to his recovery, but through a Mediator; and that therefore he was pleaſed in wonderful mercy to conſtitute and appoint his own Son Jeſus Chriſt, *God-man*, unto that Office and Undertaking; that through him, man might return and be reconciled to himſelf, whom he cauſleſly forſook; deſigning that he ſhall now become ſo affected towards himſelf, through the Mediator; and firſtly therefore towards the Mediator's own Perſon; as he was before, and ought to have been towards himſelf immediately,

Therefore, whereas God was conſiderable in relation to Man, both in his Innocency and Apoſtacy, under that fore-mentioned two-fold notion of the ſupream { Authority. / Goodneſs.

He hath alſo ſet up and exalted our Lord JeſusChriſt,and repreſented him to ſinners under an anſwerable two-fold notion of a { Prince / Saviour

i. e. a Mediating Prince and Saviour to give repentance firſt; to bow and ſtoop the hearts of ſinners, and reduce them to a ſubject poſture

ſture again, and then by remiſſion of ſins to reſtore them to favour, and ſave them from the wrath to come. Him hath the Father cloth'd with his own Authority, and fill'd with his Grace; requiring ſinners to *ſubmit* themſelves to his *ruling-power*, and *commit* themſelves to his *ſaving-mercy*; now both lodg'd in this his Son: To pay *him immediately* all homage and obedience, and through him *ultimately* to himſelf; from him *immediately* to expect ſalvation and bleſſedneſs, and through him *ultimately* from himſelf.

That whereas the ſpirits of men are not to be wrought to this temper, but by the intervention of a *diſcovery* and *revelation* of the Divine Will to this purpoſe; Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is further appointed by the Father to reveal all this his counſel to ſinners: And is eminently ſpoken of in Scripture upon this account, under the notion of *the Truth*; in which capacity he more effectually recommends to ſinners both his *authority* and his *grace*. So that his threefold (ſo much celebrated) Office of { King, Prieſt, Prophet, (the diſtinct parts of his general Office as Mediator) which he manages in order to the reducement of loſt ſinners, exactly correſpond (if you conſider the more eminent acts and properties of each Office) to that threefold notion under which the Spirit of Man muſt always have eyed and been acted towards God, had he never fallen: and hence this

this righteouſneſs, which conſiſts in conformity to the Goſpel, is the former righteouſneſs, *which was loſt*; with ſuch an acceſſion as is neceſſary, upon conſideration that it was loſt, and was only to be recovered by a Mediator.

Therefore you may now take this ſhort, and as compendious an account as I can give of it, in what follows.

It includes ſo *firm and underſtanding an aſſent* to the truth of the whole Goſpel-Revelation, as that the ſoul is thereby brought, through the power of the Holy Ghoſt, ſenſibly to apprehend its former *diſobedience* to God, and *diſtance* from him, the *reaſonableneſs* of *ſubjection* to him, and *deſirableneſs* of *bleſſedneſs* in him, the *neceſſity* of a Redeemer to reconcile and recover it to God; the accompliſhments and deſignation of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt to that purpoſe: And hence, a *penitent* and *complacential return* to God, as the *ſupream Authority*, and *ſoveraign Good*, an *humble* and *joyful* acceptance of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt as its *Prince* and *Saviour*, with *ſubmiſſion* to his *Authority*, and *reliance* on his *Grace* (the exerciſe of both which are founded in his blood), looking and pitching upon *him*, as the only *medium*, through which he and his *duties* can *pleaſe* God, or God and his Mercies *approach* him; and through which he hath the confidence to venture upon a Covenant-acceptance of God, and ſurrender of himſelf to him, afterward purſued to his uttermoſt, by a continued courſe

courſe of living in his *fear* and *love*, in *obedience* to him, and *communion* with him *through the Mediator*, always, while he is paſſing the *time* of his pilgrimage *in this world*, groaning under remaining ſin, and preſſing after perfect holineſs; with an earneſt expectation (animating him to a perſevering patience through all difficulties) of a bleſſed eternity *in the other world*.

That ſuch a conformity to the Goſpel ſhould be expreſſed by the name of *Righteouſneſs*, cannot ſeem ſtrange to ſuch as acquaint themſelves with the language of the Scripture. That gracious frame which the Goſpel (made effectual) impreſſes upon the ſoul, is the *Kingdom of God*, in the paſſive notion of it, his *Kingdom received*, and now actually come with power upon our ſpirits. And *this Kingdom* (ſometimes alſo by an apt *Synecdoche* called *Judgment* in the ſame notion) is ſaid to conſiſt in *righteouſneſs*; whence then reſult alſo, *Peace and joy in the Holy Ghoſt*. The ſame *holy impreſſions* and conſequent operations are mentioned by the Apoſtle under the name of *fruits of righteouſneſs*, wherewith he prays his *Philippians* might be filled. It was *Elymas*'s oppoſition to the Goſpel, that ſtigmatized him with that brand, Thou enemy of all *righteouſneſs*. To yeild our ſelves ſervants to *righteouſneſs*, in oppoſition to a former ſervitude to *ſin*, is *obeying from the heart the Doctrine* of the Goſpel, *into the type or mould whereof we have been caſt* or *delivered*. And ſure, both the *ſeal* and the *impreſſion*, God's revelation, and

Rom. 14. 17.

Phil. 1. 11

Ro. 6. 17.

and holineſs (however now more explicite and diſtinctly conſpicuous in all their parts) are the ſame, with us, *ſubſtantially*, and in *David*'s time; whence we need make no difficulty to own this *latter*, when we meet with it, as here, under the ſame name.

By what hath hitherto been ſaid, it may be already ſeen in part, how exactly this *righteouſneſs* correſponds to the bleſſedneſs for which it qualifies; whereof we ſhall have occaſion hereafter to take further notice. In the mean time, it will be requiſite to ſhew (which was promiſed to be done in the next place)

2. *How it qualifies.* To which I ſay (very briefly) that it qualifies for this bleſſedneſs two ways:

1. *Legally*, or *in genere Morali*, as it deſcribes the Perſons, who by the Goſpel-grant have, alone, title thereunto. *---The righteous into life eternal. ---The unrighteous ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God. Say to the righteous, it ſhall be well with them. The righteouſneſs of the righteous ſhall be upon him. ---In his righteouſneſs he ſhall live.* In which laſt words, how this righteouſneſs conduceth to life, is expreſt by the ſame Prepoſition as in the Text. In this kind it is not at all cauſal of this bleſſedneſs, but 'tis that which the free, and wiſe, and holy Law-giver thought meet, by his ſetled Conſtitution (beſides what neceſſity there is of it upon another account) to make requiſite thereto. The conformity of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt to that ſeverer

Mat. 25. 1 Cor. 6. Iſa. 3. Ezek. 18.

ſeverer Law, under which he is ſaid to have been made, is that which alone cauſes, merits, purchaſes this bleſſedneſs; which yet is to be enjoyed, not by all *indiſcriminatim*, or without diſtinction, but by ſuch alone, as come up to the terms of the *Goſpel*; as he did fully ſatisfie the ſtrict exactions of that other rigid Law, by doing and ſuffering for their ſakes.

2. *Naturally*, or *in genere Phyſico*. In this kind it may be ſaid to be ſome way cauſal, that is, to be a *cauſa materialis diſpoſitiva*, by a proper poſitive influence, diſpoſing the ſubject unto this bleſſedneſs, which that it *ſhall*, yet, enjoy, is wholly to be reſolved into the Divine good pleaſure, but it is put by this holy rectitude into that temper and poſture that it *may* enjoy it, through the Lord's gracious vouchſafement; when without it, 'twere naturally impoſſible that any ſhould. An unrighteous impure ſoul, is in a natural indiſpoſition to *ſee God* or *be bleſſed in him*. That depraved temper averts it from him, the ſteady bent of its will is ſet another way, and 'tis a contradiction that any (*in ſenſu compoſito*) *ſhould* be happy againſt their wills, *i. e.* while that averſion of will yet remains. The unrighteous baniſh themſelves from God, they ſhun and hate his preſence. Light and darkneſs cannot have communion. The Sun doth but ſhine, continue to be it ſelf, and the darkneſs vaniſhes, and is fled away. When God hath ſo determined, that only *the pure in heart ſhall ſee him*; that *without holineſs none ſhall*; he

he lays no other Law upon unholy ſouls, than what their own impure natures lay upon themſelves. If therefore it ſhould be enquired, Why may not the unrighteous be ſubjects of this bleſſedneſs, *See God*, and *be ſatisfied with his likeneſs*, as well as the righteous; the queſtion muſt be ſo anſwered, as if it were enquired, Why doth wood admit the fire to paſs upon it, ſuffer its flames to inſinuate themſelves till they have introduced its proper form, and turned it into their own likeneſs: but we ſee water doth not ſo, but violently reſiſts its firſt approaches, and declines all commerce with it? The natures of theſe agree not. And is not the contrariety here as great. We have then the qualified ſubject of this bleſſedneſs, and are next to conſider *This Bleſſedneſs it ſelf.*

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

The nature of this Bleſſedneſs propounded unto conſideration, in the three ingredients (here mentioned) whereof it conſiſts. 1. *Viſion of Gods Face.* 2. *Aſſimilation to him.* 3. *The ſatisfaction reſulting thence. Theſe propounded to be conſidered,* 1. *Abſolutely and ſingly each by it ſelf.* 2. *Relatively, in their mutual reſpects to each other. The firſt of theſe, Viſion of Gods Face, diſcourſt of.* 1. *The Object.* 2. *The Act.*

NOW for the *Nature of this bleſſedneſs*, or the enquiry wherein it lyes, ſo far as the Text gives us any account of it, we are invited to turn our thoughts and diſcourſe to it. And we have it here repreſented to us in all the particulars that can be ſuppoſed to have any nearer intereſt in the buſineſs of Bleſſedneſs, or to be more intimate and intrinſical thereunto. 2.

For (the beatifick Object ſuppoſed) what more can be neceſſary to actual, compleat, formal bleſſedneſs, than *the ſight of it*, an *adaptation*

tation or aſſimilation to it (which is nothing elſe but its being actually communicated and imparted to the ſoul, its being united and made as it were one with it), and the *complacential fruition* the ſoul hath of it ſo communicated, or having ſo transformed it into its ſelf?

And theſe three are manifeſtly contained in the Text (the beatifique Object being involved with them) the firſt in the former clauſe, *I ſhall behold thy face*, the ſecond and third in the latter, *I ſhall be ſatisfied with thy likeneſs*; where, *being made like to God* hath been diſcovered to be ſuppoſed, and the *ſatisfaction*, the pleaſant contentful reliſhes conſequent thereto, plainly expreſt.

We ſhall therefore have ſtated the entire nature of this Bleſſedneſs in the handling of theſe three things:

- Viſion of the Face of God.
- Participation of his likeneſs.
- Satisfaction therein.

And I ſhall chuſe to conſider them

1. *Abſolutely*, and ſingly, each by it ſelf.
2. *Relatively*, in the mutual reſpects (by way of influence and dependance) they may be found to have towards each other.

Therefore firſt, in the abſolute conſideration of them ſeverally, we begin with

Firſt,

Firſt, the Viſion of God's Face, where

The { *Object*, *The Face of God.*
Act of ſeeing and beholding it, are diſtinctly to be ſpoken to.

1. *The Face of God* (the Object of this Viſion), which is his glory repreſented, offered to view. And *this objected or exhibited glory* is twofold.

1. *Senſible*, ſuch as ſhall incur and gratifie (after the reſurrection) the bodily eye.
2. *Intellectual*, or *intelligible:* that *ſpiritual glory* that only comes under the view and contemplation of the glorified mind.

1. A *ſenſible* glory (to begin with what is lower) is fitly in our way to be taken notice of, and may well be comprehended (as its leſs principal intendment) within the ſignificancy of the expreſſion, *the Face of God.* So indeed it doth evidently ſignifie, *Exod.* 33.11. And if we look to the *notation* of the word, and its frequent uſe as applied to God, it may commodiouſly enough, and will, often, be found to ſignifie, in a larger and more extended ſenſe, any *aſpect* or *appearance* of God. And though it may be underſtood *verſe* 23 of that Chapter, to ſignifie an overcoming ſpiritual glory, as the principal thing

there intended, ſuch as no ſoul dwelling in fleſh, could behold, without renting the vail, and breaking all to pieces; yet, even there alſo, may ſuch a degree of ſenſible glory be ſecondarily intended, as it was not conſiſtent with a ſtate of Mortality to be able to bear.

And ſuppoſing the other expreſſion [*Thy likeneſs*] to ſignifie, in any part, the *objective glory* Saints are to behold; it is very capable of being extended ſo far, as to take in a ſenſible appearance of glory alſo, which it doth in theſe words, *The ſimilitude of the Lord ſhall he behold* (yet even that glory alſo was transformative and impreſſive of it ſelf: *Moſes* ſo long converſt with it, till he became uncapable, for the preſent, of converſe with men, as you know the ſtory relates.)

Num. 12. 8.
Ezek. 1. 28.
Exod. 34. 35. &c.

Such a glory as this, though it belong not to the being of God, yet it may be ſome umbrage of him, a more ſhadowy repreſentation, as a man's garments are of the man, which is the alluſion in that of the *Pſalmiſt*, *Thou art clothed with Majeſty and Honour: Thou coverest thy ſelf with* [*Light*] *as with a Garment.*

Pſal. 104. 1, 2.

And inaſmuch as that ſpiritual Body (*the Houſe not made with hands*) wherewith the bleſſed are to be cloth'd upon, muſt then be underſtood to have its proper ſenſitive *Powers and Organs* refined to that degree, as may be agreeable to a ſtate of Glory; ſo muſt theſe have their ſuitable *objects* to converſe

2 Cor. 5. 1

Cuilibet potentiæ activæ re ſpondet paſſiva, ſive objectum.

verſe with. A Faculty without an Object, is not poſſible in Nature, and is altogether inconſiſtent with a ſtate of Bleſſedneſs. The bodies of Saints will be *raiſed in glory---faſhioned like Chriſt's glorious body*; muſt bear the image of the heavenly; and this will connaturalize them to a Region of Glory, tender a ſurrounding ſenſible glory neceſſary and natural to them, their own element: they will, as it were, not be able to live but amidſt ſuch a glory. Place is conſervative of the body placed in it, by its ſutableneſs thereto. Indeed every created being (inaſmuch as it is not ſelf-ſufficient, and is obliged to fetch in continual refreſhings from without) muſt always have ſomewhat ſutable to it ſelf to converſe with, or it preſently languiſhes. By ſuch an harmony of actives and paſſives the world conſiſts and holds together. The leaſt defect thereof, then, is leaſt of all ſuppoſable in the ſtate of bleſſedneſs. 1 Cor. 15. 43. Phil. 3. 21.

The rays of ſuch a glory have often ſhone down into this lower World. Such a glory we know, ſhewed it ſelf upon Mount *Sinai*: afterwards, often, about the Tabernacle, and in the Temple: Such a glory appeared at our Saviours Birth, Baptiſm, and Transfiguration; and will do at his expected appearance; which leaves it, no unimaginable thing to us, and ſhews, how facile it is to God to (do that which will then be, in ſome ſort neceſſary) create a glory meet for the entertainment, and gratification of

any such faculty, as he shall then continue in being. But,

2. The *intellectual glory*, That which perfected Spirits shall eternally please themselves to behold, calls for our more especial consideration. This is the *glory that excelleth, hyperbolical* glory, (as that expression imports); such, as in comparison whereof, the other is said to be *no glory:* as the Apostle speaks, comparing the glory of the Legal, with that of the Evangelical dispensation, where the former was, we must remember, chiefly a sensible glory, the glory that shone upon Mount *Sinai*; the latter a purely spiritual glory; and surely, if the meer preludes of *this glory*, the *primordia*, the beginnings of it, *The glory---yet shining but through a glass* (as he there also speaks of this glory) were so *hyperbolically* glorious, what will it be in its highest exaltation, in its perfected state? The Apostle cannot speak of that, but with *hyperbole* upon *hyperbole* in the next Chapter, as though he would heap up words as high as heaven to reach it, and give a just account of it.

ὑπερβολὴν καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολήν. 2 Cor. 4. 17.

Things are as *their next Originals*. This glory, more immediately rays forth from God, and more nearly represents him. 'Tis his more genuine production. He is stiled the *Father of Glory*: every thing that is glorious is some way like him, and bears his image. But he is as well the *Father of Spirits*, as the Father of Glory; and that glory, which is purely spiritual, hath most in it of his

Eph. 1.

Heb. 12.

his nature and image: as beams but in the next deſcent from the body of the Sun. This is his unvailed face, and *emphatically*, the *divine likeneſs*.

Again, things are as the *Faculties* which they are to exerciſe and ſatisfie; this glory muſt exerciſe and ſatisfie the nobleſt faculty, of the moſt noble and excellent creature. Intellectual nature, in the higheſt improvement 'tis capable of in a creature, muſt here be gratified to the uttermoſt; the moſt enlarged contemplative power of an immortal Spirit finds that wherein it terminates here, with a moſt contentful acquieſcence.

'Tis true it muſt be underſtood not totally to *exceed* the capacity of a creature, but it muſt fully *come up* to it. Should it quite tranſcend the Sphere of created nature, and ſurpaſs the model of an human underſtanding (as the divine Glory undoubtedly would, did not God conſider us in the manner of exhibiting it to our view) it would *confound*, not *ſatisfie*. A creature even in glory is ſtill a Creature, and muſt be treated as ſuch. After the bleſſed God hath elevated it to the higheſt pitch, he muſt infinitely condeſcend, it cannot otherwiſe know or converſe with him. He muſt accommodate this glory to the weaker eye, the fainter and more languid apprehenſions of a poor finite thing. I had almoſt ſaid, *nothing*, for what is any creature, yea the whole creation in its beſt ſtate, compared with the *I AM*, the *being* (as he juſtly appropriates to himſelf that name) the

All in All. We muſt be careful then to ſettle in our own thoughts ſuch a ſtate of this glory (in forming that indeterminate notion we have now of it) as may render it (though confeſſedly above the meaſure of our preſent underſtandings as to a diſtinct knowledg of it) not manifeſtly incompetent to any created underſtanding whatſoever, and as may ſpeak us *duly* ſhy of aſcribing a Deity to a worm, of affixing any thing to the creature, which ſhall be found agreeing to the bleſſed God himſelf alone. Their expreſſions therefore, who over-magnifie (even Deifie) the creature aſſumed into glory, muſt be heard and read with caution and abhorrency, as the high ſwelling words of blaſphemous vanity. Is it not enough that periſhing wretches, that were within one hands breadth of Hell, are ſaved, except they be alſo Deified too? that they become *happy*, unleſs they alſo become *Gods*? The diſtance even of a glorified creature from the glorious God is ſtill infinitely greater, than between it and the ſilleſt worm, the minuteſt atome of duſt.

Not being willing to trouble a diſcourſe wholly of another nature and deſign, with any thing of controverſie:

I have choſen only to annex a marginal digreſſion, wherein, ſomewhat to animadvert upon the over-bold diſputes and definitions of the Scholaſtick generation, touching what we have now under conſideration. Some of whoſe Writings ſeem the very Springs of the putid conceits (there not wanting thoſe, that are officious enough to ſerve the illiterate, in accommodating things of that kind to their genius and language) ſo greedily imbib'd by modern Enthuſiaſts.

'Tis a Queſtion much agitated among the School-men,

And

And by how much more we shall then know of *his glory*, so much more shall we understand *that distance*. Yet as he shall then enlarge, the capacity of the soul he glorifies, to a very vast comprehension, so shall

Whether the Divine Essence be exhibited to the view of the Blessed in Heaven, *in it self immediately*, or, *by the intervention of any created likeness or similitude?*

Had it been agreed to forbear looking within this vail (the rude attempt whereof, rather rents than draws it aside) and to shut up all discourse of this kind, in a modest, awful silence; or had the Adventures some have made been *foolish* only, not *pernicious*, this present labour had been spared. But when Men speak of things above their reach, not to *no* purpose barely, but to very *bad*; what they say ought to be considered. The Divine Essence, say the *Thomists* (and the *Scotists* here disagree not) is it self immediately united to the intellect of the blessed [*in ratione Speciei intelligibilis*] so as there is no place for any intervening likeness, or representation. *Ipsa Divina Essentia est, quæ videtur & quo videtur. Thom. Sum. primâ parte, q.* 12. *Art.* 2. 3. *contr. Gentes c.* 51. Now they assert concerning the *Species intelligibiles*, in general, that they have not, *Locum objecti, intellectionem terminantis* (which they make the place and office of the *verbum mentis per intellectionem productum*) but *formæ tantùm & actus primi*, and that the understanding so acts by them, as fire by its proper form, *Thom. Sum. primâ parte, q.*85. *Art.*2 (the contrary whereto is asserted by *Scotus in* 1. *Sentent. distinct.* 3. *q.* 6.). Yea and *Cajet.* affirms 1. *p. q.* 76. *Art.* 2. That the Intellect and the intelligible species are more one than the matter and form in the *compositum*. For, saith he, (or to that purpose, not having him now at hand) the matter is not turned into the form, nor *è contrà*, but the intellect, which is in it self *meer power*, doth, *in genere intelligibili* turn into its very intelligible object; and the intelligible object it self is after a certain manner imbib'd in the intellect. So *Ledesma de Divin. perfect. q.* 3. *Art.* 5. *Unum transit in aliud, ex quo sequitur, quod unum sit aliud.* And hence, say they, applying this doctrine to the present purpose, [*& secundum istum modum, in conjunctione illâ ineffabili divinæ essentiæ cum intellectu creato, fit unum agens integrum*, scil. *intellectus creatus factus Deus mi-*

rabili modo] [*Intellectus in visione beatifica, est potentia jam deificata, per lumen gloriæ,*

the exhibition of his glory to it, be fully adequate to its most inlarged capacity. They are as yet but obscure glimmerings, we can have of this glory; But so far as, without too bold curiosity, we may, and wherein Scripture light will give us any pre-apprehension of it, let us consider a while,

Cajet. primâ parte q. 12. Art. 2. ex *Ledes.* q. 8. Art. 8.]. For besides this immediate union of the Divine Essence it self, with the intellect they assert a *lumen gloriæ*, an accident superadded, without which the vision cannot be performed; which additional the *Scotists* reject. Some, though they admit it, think the vision may be without it, and that it doth not *implicare contradictionem, visionem beatificam fieri sine lumine gloriæ, cum solo speciali Dei auxilio, quod item asserunt multi ex scholasticis, Palud. in 4. dist. 49. q. 1. Art. 3. Concl. 2. Thom. de Argent. q. 2. Art. 1. Major. q. 4. Henr. quolibet 7. Zumel. 1. p. q. 12. Art. 5. disp. 2. concl. 3. Ita Onuphr. de virtute penitentiâ.* Whether there be any *verbum creatum*, the product of intellection, The *Thomists* are themselves divided. Their more common opinion is, that there is none, as *Ledesma* assures us; telling us also his reason, why he conceives there can be none. *Beati non formant verbum in videndo Deo, sed plus vident quam verbo creato dicere possunt —— nam beatus per visionem beatam quamvis non videat [infinitè] videt tamen infinitum* —— (which is their great argument against any intelligible species), and he further adds, *sicut visio Dei, quæ est in ipso Deo, habet pro principio & specie intelligibili ipsam Divinam Essentiam; & pro termino ipsam Divinam Essentiam; Sic visio beatorum est ita supernaturalis, & divini ordinis, & participatio divinæ visionis ita perfecta, ut ipsa etiam habeat pro principio & specie intelligibili, divinam Essentiam, & pro termino sive verbo producto, ipsammet divinam Essentiam.* So that the principle and term of this vision are own'd to be nothing else, but the simple Divine Essence. Concerning the formal act it self, it is much disputed, whether the creatures intellect do at all effectively concur to it, or whether God himself, be not the only efficient or agent in this vision. Some stick not to affirm the latter, *Marsil. in 3. q. 1. Palud. in 4. dist. 49. q. 1.*

The

The {Nature / Excellency} of it.

We cannot indeed conſider theſe ſeparately; for we can no ſooner underſtand it to be *glory*, than we conceive it *excellent*: *Glory*, in the proper Notion of it, being nothing elſe but reſplendent excellency, the luſtre of excellency, or real worth made conſpicuous. Yet as

Art. 2. (*referente Ledeſmâ*) and ſay plainly, that the action of the inferiour agent wholly ceaſes,

and the ſuperiour only acts; the ſame thing that D. M. *Cauſabon* in his Enthuſiaſm charges one *Maximus* with, who in a book entituled κεφάλαια θεολογικὰ writes thus: τὸν ἄμεσον λαβὸν ἕνωσιν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ὁ νοῦς τὸ τῶν νοητῶν καὶ νοήσεως παντελῶς διάφορον ἴσχει οὐκέτ' ὄντως. *That the Soul taken into immediate union with God, loſes all its knowing power*, (though this be not diſtinctively ſpoken of the ſtate of glory): And what doth this amount to? but that while they are eagerly contending about the Saints bleſſedneſs, and too curiouſly labouring to explicate the manner of their ſeeing God, they unawares deſtroy the ſubject of the queſtion, and deny that they ſee him at all; and ſo upon the whole, diſpute themſelves into a worſe than Paganiſh infidelity. And even the reſt, that agree in the ſenſe of the paſſages above recited, will not be eaſily able to avoid the charge of as intolerable conſequences; which it is my buſineſs, here, only to diſcover, and not to determine any thing in this controverſie, whiles I tax the too much boldneſs of others, who adventure it. And here not to inſiſt on the abſurdity of what they ſay concerning the intelligible ſpecies in general, let it be conſidered. 1. That the Divine Eſſence is ſaid to be united to the intellect of the bleſſed, as an *intelligible ſpecies*. 2. That the *intelligible ſpecies*, in the buſineſs of intellection, and the intellect, become one another, do not remain diſtinct things united, but are identified. 3. That hence in underſtanding God, the intellect is deified and becomes God, which naturally follows from the two former; and is moreover expreſly aſſerted in plain words. What need is there to preſs this Doctrine with hard conſequencies? or how can it look worſe than it doth already, with its own natural face? Nor

there

can I apprehend which way it should be made look better. For should it lay claim

there is an excellency conceivable in the nature of it, that excellency whereof it is the splendor and brightness; so we must conceive a peculiar excellency of that very radiation, that splendor it self, wherewith it shines unto blessed souls. *In its very nature* it is the *brightness of Divine excellencies:* in its *present appearance*, it shines in the highest

to that favour, to be understood according to the usual sense of the peripatetick maxim, *Intellectus, intelligendo, fit omnia*; it will be found manifestly to have precluded it self. That maxim is wont to be understood thus; that the intellect becomes that which it understands *representative*, by putting on the *species* or *likeness* of its Object, the representation of it. For instance, when I form in my mind the notion of a mountain, my understanding becomes an Ideal or spiritual mountain: it becomes that species (which is liable to more exception too than I shall now insist on, and looks more like the language of a Poet than a Philosopher) that is now formed there; and not the material mountain it self. But how shall this assertion [*The understanding, by its act of understanding God, becomes God*] be capable of that interpretation, *i.e.* It becomes his *likeness*, his *Idea*, his representation now formed in it, when any such intervening likeness or representation is utterly denied; and that supposed species is said to be the simple Divine essence it self? and if the Divine essence it self be that species by which 'tis understood, will it not follow from that other *Aristotelian* axiom (which with them must signifie as much as a Text from Saint *Paul*) *scibile & scientia sunt idem*: That our very knowledg of God must be God too, or, would they disown that maxim, sure, when once the *faculty* is supposed deified, the *act* immanent in it, cannot be a created accident; nor can that maxim (understood of the *scibile representativum*, or the *species scibilis*) be denied by them: And sure, if the Saints *knowledg of God*, the likeness of him in their *minds* be God; their *holiness*, the likeness of him in their *hearts*, must be so too. How absurd then would it be, to use that Scripture language, and speak of these under the names of Gods image or likeness, when *Similitude* and *Identity*, are notions so vastly disagreeing; and since a Saints knowledg and

excellency

excellency of that brightneſs; in its nature *it excelleth all things elſe*: in its preſent exhibition, compared with all its former radiations, *it excelleth it ſelf.*

As to the nature of this Glory, 'tis nothing elſe but the conſpicuous luſtre of Divine perfections. We can only guide our preſent conceptions of it, by the diſcovery God hath already given us of himſelf, in thoſe ſeveral excellencies of his Being, the great *Attributes* that are convertible and one with him. When *Moſes* beſought Him for a ſight of his glory, he anſwers him with this, *I will proclaim my name before thee.* His Name, we know, is the collection of his Attributes,

holineſs here and in heaven differ but in degree; they can be, *here on earth*, nothing but God dwelling in them. And ſuppoſing that *Socinus* have better defended his adverſaries impugned the real identity of the ſoul and its faculties, *that* muſt be deified too. However, what could be imagined more abſurd, than that the ſubſtance of the ſoul ſhould be a creature, and its faculty God? Whence then do we think that modern Familiſts have fetched their admired nonſenſe? Whom have they had their original Inſtructors? or who have taught them that brave magnificent language of being Godded with God, and Chriſted with Chriſt, but theſe? Nor ſure need they bluſh to be found guilty of ſo profoundly learned inconſiſtencies, or to ſpeak abſurdly after ſuch Patrons. And what ſhould occaſion theſe men ſo to involve themſelves, I cannot find, or divine more than this, that they were not able to faſten upon any more tolerable ſenſe of the word Καθὼς 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. 1 *Joh.* 3. 2. but taking that in its higheſt pitch of ſignificancy; all their argumants are generally levelled at this mark, to prove that no created ſpecies can poſſibly repreſent God [*ſicuti eſt*], and thence infer, that he cannot be ſeen by any created ſpecies in the glorified ſtate, where he is to be ſeen *ſicuti eſt*. But could we content our ſelves with a modeſt interpretation of theſe words, and underſtand them to ſpeak not of a *parity*, but of a *ſimilitude* only be-

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tween God's knowledg and ours, nor of an abſolute *omnimodam ſimilitudo*, but comparative only: that

The notion therefore we can hence form of this glory, is only ſuch as we may have of a large Volume by a brief Synopſis or Table; of a magnificent Fabrick, by a ſmall Module or Platform; a ſpacious Country, by a little Landskip. He hath here given us a *true* repreſentation of himſelf, not a *full*: ſuch as will ſecure our apprehenſions, being guided thereby, from *error*, not from *ignorance*. So is, that comparing our *future* with our *preſent* ſtate, the *former* ſhall ſo far excel *this*, that, in compariſon thereof, it may be ſaid to be a knowing of God, *as we are known*, and *as he is*; inſomuch as our future knowledg of him, ſhall approach ſo unſpeakably nearer to his moſt perfect knowledg of us, and the truth of the thing, than our preſent knowledg doth or can; by ſuch an interpretation we are caſt upon no ſuch difficulties. For admit that no ſpecies can repreſent God *as he is*, in the higheſt ſenſe of theſe words; yet ſure, in the ſame ſenſe wherein he can be *ſeen* by us *as he is*, he may be *repreſented* to us *as he is*. And what can be more frivolous than that fore-recited reaſoning to the contrary? "*There can be no created repre-*"*ſentation of God* [*ſicuti eſt*] *adequate to the Viſion the bleſſed have of* "*him*; *but they ſee more than any created repreſentation can con-*"*tain*; *for they ſee infinitum*, *though not infinitè*. For how muſt we underſtand the *infinitum* they are ſaid to ſee? Materially, or formally? Muſt we underſtand by it him that is infinite only, or as he is infinite? If it be ſaid the *latter*, that, is to ſay, they ſee *infinitè* too: If the *former* only; Do not Saints on earth ſee (*viz.* mentally, which is the Viſion we are ſpeaking of) him who is infinite, in their preſent ſtate, where it is acknowledged their knowledg is by *Species*.

Yet would I not hence conclude, that the knowledg Saints ſhall have of God hereafter, ſhall be by *Species*; for my deſign in all this is but to diſcover the vanity of too poſitive and definitive conceptions concerning it, beyond the meaſure of God's Revelation, and the dictate of clear and unintangled Reaſon. All knowledg hath been thought to be by aſſimilation, *i. e.* by receiving the ſpecies or images of the things known. So the

as

as they *swerve* not in apprehending this glory, though they still *fall short*. We can now apply our minds to contemplate the several perfections which the blessed God assumes to himself, and whereby he describes to us his own Being; and can in our thoughts *attribute* them all to him, though we have still but low defective conceptions of each one. As if we could at a distance distinguish the Streets and Houses of a great City; but every one appears to us much less than it is. We can apprehend somewhat of whatsoever he reveals to be in himself; yet when all is done,

intellect is not really turned into the things which it understands, but only receives their species, wherewith it is united so closely, that it is therefore said to be [*like*] to them. *Virtuosi* of *France*, Confer. 65.

One way or other it hath been judged necessary the mind should be furnished with such images of the thing it is said to understand; which therefore some have thought *connate*; others, supplied by sense totally; others, by a separate *intellectus Agens*; which some have thought to be God himself: others, one common Intelligence: others, a particular Genius. So indispensably necessary it hath been reckon d unto intellection, that the office of furnishing the mind with the images of the things to be understood, should be performed by one or other. If any clearer explication can be given, or better way assigned of the soul's knowing things, it cannot but be welcome to rational men. But I see no necessity or reason it should have a specifically distinct way of knowing here and in Heaven. Much less that we should imagine to our selves such a one, as to that other state, as is altogether unaccountable and capable of no rational explication; and reckon it much more *becoming* to be silent, than on pretence of any mysteriousness in the things we discourse of, to talk absurdly and unintelligibly about them. A confessed ignorance in this case is *becoming*, to say with that great Apostle, *It doth not appear what we shall be*: But to conclude and define such matters is surely φρονεῖν παρ' ὃ δεῖ φρονεῖν.

how

how little a portion do we take up of him! Our thoughts are empty and languid, ſtraight and narrow, ſuch as diminiſh and limit the Holy One. Yet ſo far as our apprehenſions can correſpond to the diſcovery he affords us of his ſeveral Excellencies, we have a preſent view of the Divine Glory. Do but ſtrictly and diſtinctly ſurvey the many Perfections comprehended in his Name, then gather them up, and conſider how glorious he is! Conceive *one glory* reſulting from ſubſtantial Wiſdom, Goodneſs, Power, Truth, Juſtice, Holineſs, that is, beaming forth from him who is all theſe *by his very Eſſence, neceſſarily, originally, infinitely, eternally*, with whatſoever elſe is truly a Perfection. This is the glory bleſſed Souls ſhall behold for ever.

2 Pet. 1. 17 *For the excellency of it*, 'tis called *by way of diſcrimination, The excellent glory.* There was glory put upon Chriſt in the transfiguration; of which, when the Apoſtle ſpeaks, having occaſion to mention, withal, *the glory of heaven it ſelf*, from whence the voice came; he adds to this latter, the diſtinguiſhing note of *the excellent*: He himſelf was eye-witneſs of the Honour, and Majeſty, and Glory, which the Lord Jeſus then received; but beyond all this, the glory from whence the voice came, was the *excellent* or *ſtately* glory, as the word imports.

Μεγαλο-πρεπής.

'Tis a great intimation how *excellent* a glory this is, that 'tis ſaid to be a glory *yet to be revealed*; as if it had been ſaid, Whatever appearances of the Divine Glory are now

1 Pet. 4. 13.

now offered to your view, there is ſtill ſomewhat undiſcovered, ſomewhat behind the Curtain that will outſhine all. You have not ſeen ſo much, but you are ſtill to expect unſpeakably more.

Glory is then to ſhine in its Noon-day ſtrength and vigour: 'Tis then in its Meridian. *Here*, the *riches of glory* are to be diſplayed, certain Treaſures of Glory, the plenitude and magnificence of glory. We are *here, to ſee him as he is*; to know him as we are known of him. Certainly, *the diſplay of himſelf*, the *rays* of his diſcovered excellency, muſt hold proportion with that *Viſion*, and be therefore exceedingly glorious. *'Tis the glory Chriſt had with the Father before the foundations of the world were laid*; into the viſion and communion whereof, holy ſouls ſhall now be taken, according as their capacities can admit; that wherewithall his great atchievements and high merits ſhall be rewarded eternally; that wherewith he is to be glorified in Heaven, in compenſation of having glorified his Father on earth, and finiſhed the work whereto he was appointed. This cannot but be a moſt tranſcendent glory. 'Tis in ſum, and in the language of the Text, the glory of *God's own face*, his moſt aſpectable, conſpicuous glory. Whoſe transforming beams are productive of the *glory impreſt*, the next ingredient into this bleſſedneſs, which will preſently come to be ſpoken of, after we have given you ſome ſhort account of

John 17.

2. *The*

2. *The Act of beholding:* the *viſion* or *intuition* it ſelf, by which, intervening, the impreſſion is made.

Glory ſeems to carry in it a peculiar reſpect to the *viſive power* (whether corporal or mental, as it is it ſelf of the one kind or the other); 'tis ſomething to be *contemplated*, to be lookt upon. And being to tranſmit an *impreſſion*, and conſequent *pleaſure* to another ſubject, it muſt neceſſarily be ſo, it can neither *transform* nor *ſatisfie*, but as it is beheld.

And here the *ſenſitive intuition* I ſhall not inſiſt on, as being leſs intended in the Text, and the diſcourſe of it leſs ſutable to ſuch as with a ſpiritual mind and deſign ſet themſelves to enquire into the nature of the Saints bleſſedneſs. Yet, as *this* is the moſt noble, comprehenſive, quick, and ſprightly *ſenſe*, ſo is the *Act* of it more conſiderable, in the matter of bleſſedneſs, than any other of the outward man, and the moſt perfect imitation of the act of the mind; whence alſo *this* ſo often borrows the name of the *other*, and is called *ſeeing*. 'Tis an act indeed very proper and pertinent to a ſtate of glory. By how much more any ſenſible object is glorious (ſuppoſing the *ſenſorium* to be duly diſpoſed and fortified, as muſt be here ſuppoſed), ſo much is it the fitter object of *Sight*; hence when we would expreſs a glorious object, we call it *conſpicuous*; and the leſs glorious, or more obſcure any thing is, the leſs viſible it is, and the nearer it approaches to inviſibility; whence that

that ſaying in the common Philoſophy, *To ſee blackneſs is to ſee nothing.* *Ariſt. lib. 3. Meteorolog. Cap. de Iride.*

Whatſoever a glorified eye, repleniſhed with a heavenly vitality and vigor, can fetch in from the many glorified objects that encompaſs it, we muſt ſuppoſe to concur to this bleſſedneſs. Now is the *eye ſatisfied with ſeeing*, which before never could.

But, 'tis intellectual ſight we are chiefly to conſider here, that, whereby we ſee him that is inviſible, and approach the *inacceſſible Light*. The word here uſed, ſome Criticks tell us, more uſually ſignifies the ſight of the mind. And *then*, not a caſual, ſuperficial glancing at a thing, but *contemplation*, a ſtudious, deſigned viewing of a thing, when we ſolemnly compoſe and apply our ſelves thereto; or the viſion of Prophets, or ſuch as have things diſcovered to them by divine Revelation, (thence called *Chozim*, Seers,) which imports (though not a previous deſign, yet) no leſs intention of mind in the act it ſelf.

And ſo it more fitly expreſſes that knowledg which we have, not by diſcourſe and reaſoning out of one thing from another, but by immediate intuition of what is nakedly, and at once, offered to our view, which is the more proper knowledg of the bleſſed in Heaven. They ſhall have the glory of God ſo preſented, and their minds ſo enlarged, as to comprehend much at one view; in which reſpect they may be ſaid, in a great degree, *to know as they are known*,

in as much as the bleſſed God comprehends all things at once, in one ſimple act of knowing. Yet that is not to be underſtood as if the ſtate of glory ſhould exclude all *ratiocination*, more than our preſent ſtate doth all *intuition*, (for firſt and indemonſtrable principles we ſee by their own light, without illation or argument); nor can it be inconvenient to admit, that while the knowledg the bleſſed have of God is not infinite, there may be uſe of their diſcurſive faculty with great fruit and pleaſure. Pure intuition of God, without any mixture of reaſoning, is acknowledged (by ſuch as are apt enough to be over-aſcribing to the creature) peculiar to God alone. But as the bleſſed God ſhall continually afford (if we may ſpeak of continuity in Eternity, which yet we cannot otherwiſe apprehend) a clear diſcovery of himſelf, ſo ſhall the principal exerciſe, and felicity of the bleſſed ſoul conſiſt in that leſs laborious, and more pleaſant way of knowing, a meer admitting or entertaining of thoſe free beams of voluntary light, by a grateful intuition; which way of knowing, the expreſſion of *ſight*, or *beholding*, doth moſt incline to, and that is, we are ſure, the ordinary language of Scripture about this matter.

Cognoſcere Deum clarè & intuitivè eſt proprium & naturale ſoli Deo, ſicut eſt proprium igni calefacere & ſoli illuminare. Ledeſm. *de divin. perfect.* q. 3. Art. 7. Mat. 5. 8. Heb. 12. 14.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

The ſecond Ingredient into this Bleſſedneſs conſidered, Aſſimilation to God, *or his Glory impreſt: wherein it conſiſts, diſcovered in ſundry Propoſitions. The third Ingredient,* The Satisfaction and Pleaſure which reſults, *ſtated and opened.*

AND now, upon this Viſion of the bleſſed Face of God, next follows, in the order of diſcourſe, The Souls perfect *aſſimilation* unto that revealed Glory, or its participation thereof, (touching the order the things themſelves have to one another, there will be conſideration had in its proper place); and this alſo muſt be conſidered as a diſtinct and neceſſary ingredient into the ſtate of bleſſedneſs we are treating of.

Diſtinct it is, for though the Viſion now ſpoken of, doth include a certain kind of aſſimilation in it, as all Viſion doth, being only a reception of the ſpecies or likeneſs of the Object ſeen: This aſſimilation we are to ſpeak of, is of a very different kind. *That*, is ſuch as affects only the viſive or cognitive power, and that not with a *real* change, but *intentional* only, nor for longer continuance than the act of Seeing laſts; but *this* is *total*, *real*, and *permanent*.

And ſurely it is of equal neceſſity to the Souls bleſſedneſs, to *partake* the Glory of God, as to *behold* it; as well to have the divine likeneſs *impreſt* upon it, as *repreſented* to it. After ſo contagious and over-ſpreading a depravation as ſin hath diffus'd through all its powers, it can never be happy without a change of its very *crasis* and temper throughout. A diſeaſed ulcerous body would take little felicity in gay and glorious ſights: no more would all the glory of Heaven ſignifie to a ſick, deformed, ſelf-loathing Soul.

It muſt therefore be all glorious within, have the Divine Nature more perfectly communicated, the likeneſs of God transfus'd and wrought into it. This is the bleſſed work begun in Regeneration; but how far it is from being perfected, we may ſoon find by conſidering, how far ſhort we are of being ſatisfied in our preſent ſtate, even in the contemplation of the higheſt and moſt excellent Objects. How taſteleſs to our Souls are the thoughts of God! How little pleaſure do we take in viewing over his glorious Attributes! the moſt acknowledged and adorable excellencies of his Being! And whereto can we impute it but to this, that our ſpirits are not yet ſufficiently connaturallized to them? Their likeneſs is not enough deeply inſtamped on our Souls. Nor will this be, *till we awake*; When we ſee better, we ſhall become better: *When he appears, we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is.*

But

But do we indeed pretend to ſuch an expectation? Can we think what God is, and what we are in our preſent ſtate, and not confeſs theſe words to carry with them an amazing ſound, *we ſhall be like him*! How great an hope is this! How ſtrange an errand hath the Goſpel into the world! How admirable a deſign! to transform men and make them like God! Were the duſt of the earth turned into ſtars in the firmament, were the moſt ſtupendous poetical transformations aſſured *realities*; what could equal the greatneſs and the wonder of this mighty change? Yea, and doth not the expectation of it ſeem as preſumptuous, as the iſſue it ſelf would be ſtrange? Is it not an overbold deſire? too daring a thought? a thing *unlawful* to be *affected*, as it ſeems *impoſſible* to be *attained*?

It muſt be acknowledged there is an appearance of high arrogance in aſpiring to this, *to be like God*. And the very wiſh or thought of being ſo, *in all reſpects*, were not to be entertained without horror: 'Tis a matter therefore that requires ſome diſquiſition and explication, wherein that impreſſed likeneſs of God conſiſts, which muſt concur to the Saints bleſſedneſs. In order hereunto then take the following Propoſitions:

1. *There is a ſenſe wherein to be like God is altogether impoſſible, and the very deſire of it one of the moſt horrid wickedneſs.* The Prophet in the name of God charges the proud Prince

Propoſition 1.

of *Tyre* with this, as an inexpiable arrogance that he did *set his heart as the heart of God*, and upon this score challenges and enters the lists with him: Come, you that would fain be taken for a God, I'll make a sorry God
Verse 6. of thee e're I have done; *Because thou hast set thy heart as the heart of God*, I'le set those upon thee, that shall draw their Swords, a-
7. gainst the *beauty of thy wisdom, and that shall defile thy brightness*; And what? *Wilt thou*
8. *yet say in the hand of him that slayeth thee, I*
9. *am a God? Thou shalt be a man, and no God,*
10. *in the hand of him that slayeth thee;—I have spoken it saith the Lord God.* He will endure no such imitation of him, as to be rival'd
Deut. 32. in the point of his *Godhead*. This is the
21. matter of his jealousie; *They have moved me to jealousie with not-God* (so 'tis shortly and more smartly spoken in the Original Text). And see how he displays his threats and terrors hereupon in the following verses. This was the *design* and *inducement* of the first transgression, *to be as Gods*. And indeed all sin may be reduced hither; What else is sin (in the most comprehensive notion) but *an undue imitation of God?* an exalting of the *Creatures Will* into a supremacy, and opposing it as such to the *divine? To sin*, is to take upon us, as if we were supream, and *that there were no Lord over us*; 'Tis to assume to our selves a Deity, as if we were under no Law or Rule; as he is not under any, but what he is to himself. Herein, to be like God, is the very core, and malignity of sin.

2. *There*

2. *There is a juſt and laudable imitation of God*, a likeneſs to him, that is matter of *command*, *praiſe*, and *promiſe*, as wherein both the *duty*, *excellency* and *bleſſedneſs* of the reaſonable Creature doth conſiſt; and which is in ſome reſpect inſeparable from the nature of man. We are *required* to be followers of God, as dear Children (imitators the word is). *David* is commended *as a man after Gods own heart* (though but now, we ſaw in another, with what diſdain and indignation it was reſented, that he did ſet his heart, as the heart of *God*). The *new Creature*, the *new Man*, the firſt fruits, (as he is called) the flower of the Creation, is made after God. Saints expect, upon the aſſurance of his word, to be more fully *like him*, as we ſee in the text, and parallel places. Yea man was made at firſt with a concreate ſimilitude to God, which we know was the counſel of Heaven, and the reſult and iſſue of that counſel, *Gen.* 1. 26, 27. This is evident enough in it ſelf, and needs no more words. But to make a further ſtep in this buſineſs, obſerve next, 2. Eph. 5. 1. μιμηται. Jam. 1. 18. Eph. 4. 24.

3. *There can be no allowable imitation of any one, but with an exception, as to ſome peculiarities, that may belong to his ſpecial ſtation, relation, and other circumſtances of the condition in which he is; or with limitation to ſuch things, as are of common concernment unto both.* 'Tis commonly obſerved, how naturally a people form their manners and faſhions to the example of the Prince; and 3. *Regis ad exemplum totus componitur orbis.*

there is no well-diſpoſed Ruler, but would take it well, to be imitated in things that are of common concernment to him and his ſubjects, that is, that concern him, *not as he is a King*, but *as he is a Man, or a Chriſtian.* To behold the transforming power of his own example; where it is ſuch as begets a fair and unreproachful impreſs *; how *his virtues* circulate (his juſtice, temperance, love of Religion), and produce their likeneſs among his people; 'twill be a glory, and cannot but be reſented with ſome *delight.* We caſt an *honor* upon them whom we imitate: for we acknowledg an *excellency* in them (which is all that honouring imports in the firſt notion of it,) and that *naturally* is received with pleaſure. But now, ſhould ſubjects aſpire to a *likeneſs* to their Prince, in the proper appendages and acts of *Sovereignty*; and becauſe he is a glorious King, they will be ſuch too; and aſſume the peculiar cogniſances of *Regality*; aſcend the Throne, ſway the Scepter, wear the Crown, enact Laws, &c. There cannot be more of *dutifulneſs* and *obſervance*, in the *former* imitation; than there is of *diſloyalty* and *treaſon* in *this.* A Father is pleaſed, to have his Son imitate him, within ſuch limits beforementioned; but, if he will govern the Family, and fill up his room in all relations, this will never be endured.

* *Nam facere veſtè bonus princeps faciendo docet. Cumque ſit imperio maximus, exemplo major eſt.* Velleius Paterculus, Rom. Hiſt. l. 2.

4. *4. There are ſome things to be found in the bleſſed God, not ſo incommunicable and appropriate, but that his Creatures may be ſaid to have*

ſome

ſome participation thereof with him: and ſo far, to be truly like him. This participation cannot be *univocal*; as the nature of a living Creature in general, is equally in *Men* and *Brutes*; So, it is a ſelf-evident Principle, that *Nothing can be common to God and an inferiour being.* Nor is it only *æquivocal*; a participation but of the ſame name, when the natures ſignified thereby are *altogether* diverſe: But *analogical*, in as much as the things ſpoken, under the ſame names, of God and the creature, have a *real likeneſs*, and *conveniency in nature* with one another: and they are in God, *primarily*; in the creature, by *dependance*, and *derivation*: in *him*, *eſſentially*, as being his very *Eſſence*; in *them*, but as *accidents*, (many of them) adventitious to their beings: and ſo while they cannot be ſaid to be the *ſame* things in *them*, as in *him*, are fitly ſaid to be his *likeneſs*.

Inter Deum & creaturam nihil eſt commune.

5. *This likeneſs, as it is principally found in man, among all the terreſtrial creatures; ſo hath it, in man, for its ſeat and ſubject, his Soul or ſpiritual part.* The effects of divine wiſdom, power, goodneſs, are every where viſible, throughout the whole Creation; and as there is no effect, but hath ſomething in it, correſponding to its cauſe (wherein it was its cauſe;) ſo, every Creature doth, ſome way or other, repreſent God. Some in virtues, ſome in life, ſome in being * on-

5.

* *Multis enim modis dici res poſſunt ſimiles Deo: alia ſecundùm virtutem, & ſapientiam, facta; quia in ipſo eſt virtus & ſapientia non facta: alia in quantum ſolùm vivunt, quia ille ſummè & primò vivit; alia, in quantum ſunt, quia ille ſummè & primitus eſt.* Aug. 80 queſt. p. (*mihi*) 211.

ly,

ly. The *material world* represents him, as an *house* the *builder*; but *spiritual beings*, as a *child* the *father* *. *Other* Creatures (as one † fitly expresses it) carry his *footsteps*; *these*, his *image*; and that, *not as drawn with a pencil*, which can only express *figure* and *colour*; but, as *represented in a glass*, which imitates *action* and *motion*. To give the preheminence therefore * in this point to the body of man, was a conceit so gross, that one would wonder how it should obtain; at least in the Christian world.

* τοῦ γὰρ γένος ἐσμέν.

† *P. Molinaeus de cognitione Dei.*

* Heathens have disdained and declaimed against so unworthy thoughts of God. Τὸ δὲ θεῖον αὐτὸ ἀόρατον ὀφθαλμοῖς, ἄῤῥητον φωνῇ, ἀναφὲς σαρκί, &c. *Maximus Tyr. Dissert.* 1.

The same Author warns us to take heed, that we ascribe to God, Μήτε μέγεθος, μήτε χρῶμα, μήτε σχῆμα, μήτε ἄλλο τι ὕλης πάθος. Ibid.

Unto which purpose is that decantate Distich of *Homer*, Οὐ γὰρ σῖτον, &c. And that saying of *Pliny*, *Quapropter effigiem Dei formámque quaerere; imbecillitatis humanae reor*, applied by *Zanch. de operibus Dei.* And we may see much of like import alledg'd by *Natal. Com. lib.* 1. *p.*13. Which (by the way) discovers how flatly opposite the Idolatry, forbidden in the second Commandment, is to the light of Nature it self. Which hath been also the just Apology of the Ancient Patrons of the Christian cause, for the simplicity of their Worship in this respect: and their not imitating the pompous vanity of Pagan Image worship. Οὐδὲ θείας εἰκόνας ὑπολαμβάνομεν εἶναι τὰ ἀγάλματα. ἅτε μορφὴν ἀοράτου θεοῦ καὶ ἀσωμάτου μὴ διαγράφοντες, &c. *Origen. contr. Celsum. lib.* 7.

To which purpose see at large *Min. Felix*, *Quod simulacrum Deo fingam? &c.*

And surely 'tis as improvable against the same piece of Christian *Paganism* The usually assigned differences would easily be shewn to be trifling impertinencies.

Yet

Yet we find it expreſly charged by Saint *Auguſtine* upon the *Anthropomorphites* of old (or *Melitonians*, as he calls them, from one *Melito* the Father of them) not only, that they imagined God in a human ſhape (which was their known conceit) but that they ſtated Gods Image in Man, in his *body*, not his *ſoul*. Nor are *Van Helmonts* Phanſies, about corporal likeneſs, capable of excuſe by any thing, but that they were a *dream* (as they are fitly ſtil'd) and not likely to impoſe upon the waking reaſon of any man.

Corpus hominis non animam eſſe imaginem Dei. Aug. (if it be *Auguſtines*) lib. de hæreſibus. See Dr. Charleton of his Image of God in man.

6. This image or likeneſs of God in the Spirit of man, repreſenting what is communicable in him, is either Natural or Moral. There is *firſt*, a *natural image of God*, in the ſoul of man, which is inſeparable from it; and which it can never diveſt it ſelf of *. *Its* very ſpiritual immortal nature, it ſelf, is a repreſentation of *his*. Its intellective and elective powers are the image of what we are conſtrained to conceive under the notion of the ſame powers in him. Yea, the ſame *underſtanding*, with the *memory*, and *will*, in one ſoul, are thought a lively reſemblance of the † *Trinune* Deity. But there is further a ſimilitude of him in reſpect of *moral* * virtues or perfections anſwering to what we conceive in him, under *that notion*: His *wiſdom*, (ſo far as it hath the nature of a moral virtue) his *mercy*, *truth*,

6.

* *Eſt Dei ſimilitudo quædam, quam ut mo vivens, niſi cum vitâ exuit? quam habet homo & volens, & nolens, &c.* Bernard. de vitâ Solitar.

† D. Aug. (*ſuſ*) lib. 10. de Trinitat.

* *Sed eſt alia, magis Deo propinqua, ſimilitudo, quæ in virtutibus conſiſtit,* Bernard.

vine

righteouſneſs, holineſs, &c. Theſe two kinds or parts (as they may be called) of the divine impreſs upon the Spirits of men, are diſtinguiſht by ſome (I ſee not how properly) by the diſtinct names of *Image*, denoting the *former*; and *ſimilitude*, the latter: anſwering, as is thought, to two Hebrew words of the like import *: but the things themſelves are evidently enough diſtinct, *viz.* what perfects the nature of man *in genere phyſico*, as he is ſuch a particular being in the Universe: and what perfects him, *in genere morali*, as he is conſiderable in reference to a *Law or rule* guiding him to *bleſſedneſs, as his end.*

* צלם • דמות. *Zanch.*

7. 7. *'Tis a likeneſs to God in reſpect of thoſe moral excellencies or perfections, that is eſpecially conſiderable by us, in reference to our preſent purpoſe; as more immediately relating to the ſouls bleſſedneſs in God.* By the former it hath a *potentiality*, by the latter an *habitude* in reference thereunto. Or (to uſe terms, more liable to common apprehenſion) by the *former* it hath a *remoter capacity*, by the latter a *preſent ſituneſs*; or, as the Apoſtle expreſſes it, is *made meet* to be partaker of the inheritance of the Saints in Light, (i. e. *conſidering* this *likeneſs*, as begun in the ſoul).

8. 8. *Beſides what is thus (in the ſenſe before expreſt) communicable between God and man, there are ſome things ſo peculiarly appropriate to God, as that, in reſpect of them, there can be no formal likeneſs in the creature:*

ture: and it would be impious boldneſs to aſpire thereto. Many things of this kind might be mentioned; I ſhall only inſtance in two, wherein there is a manifeſt competition of the Apoſtate world with him; and which are therefore more *relative* to practice; His *Soveraign authority, and his Independency.* In theſe while men *affect to imitate*, they wickedly *affront* him. And here is the great controverſie between the glorious God, and the degenerous Children of Men. Every man would catch at a God-head, and either aſſume it to himſelf, or caſt it, many times, upon other creatures, viler and more ignoble than himſelf: ſnatch the reins of Government out of Gods hand; and exalt their own wills into an abſoluteneſs, as liable to controul from none: place and ſettle their dependance on their own wit, power, fortitude, induſtry; or, if that be a more hopeleſs courſe (for they often find an entire Godhead too much for one creature, and are therefore conſtrained to parcel it out among many) place their confidences, and expectations in ſomething elſe without them: do, often, that ridiculous thing, ſo worthy to be hooted at, make the congeſted dirt of the earth their truſt, (the righteous ſhall laugh at him, and ſay, Lo! this is the man that truſted in riches;) their wealth, their ſtrong Tower; which only the Name of the Lord is to his Righteous ones. Yet, all the while, *ſelf* is the center, and end in which all muſt meet and terminate. This at laſt carries away Pſal. 52. 6, 7.

way the aſſumed fictitious Deity. And this thing, that is thus now made *like God*, is an *Idol* (which indeed ſignifies ſo much,) and this imitation of him wicked Idolatry; than which nothing more debaſes a reaſonable ſoul, or diveſts man of himſelf, that till
Iſa. 46.8. they redreſs this, they give no proof of their being men.

This *aſſimilation* of our ſelves to God is very remote then from being a perfection; it is a moſt reproachful deformity: as we know imitations, if they be viſibly affected, and ſtrained too far, are always thought ridiculous by Wiſe men.

9. *9. Though, in reſpect of theſe incommunicable things, there cannot be a proper, formal, immediate ſimilitude to God; yet, there ought to be a correſpondency; which muſt be meaſured, and eſtimated by the conſideration of his ſtate, and ours: whence it will appear, that what ſo properly appertains to him, and what ought to correſpond thereto in us, do agree to each, upon one and the ſame intervening reaſon.*

For inſtance, Is he *abſolutely Supream*, in as much as he is the firſt Being? the correſpondent impreſſion with us, and upon the ſame reaſon, muſt be a moſt profound, humble ſelf-ſubjection, diſpoſing our ſouls to conſtant obedience to him. Again, Is he *ſimply independent*, as being ſelf-ſufficient and *all in all*? the impreſſion with us muſt be a *nothingneſs*, and ſelf-emptineſs, engaging us to quit our ſelves, and live in him.

This

This is the only conformity to God, which *with reſpect to his incommunicable excellencies*, our creature-ſtate can admit. It may be alſo ſtil'd *a likeneſs to him*, being a real conformity to his Will concerning us, and his very nature as it reſpects us. We may conceive of it, as of the likeneſs between a Seal, and the ſtamp made by it; Eſpecially, ſuppoſing the inequality of parts in the Seal, to be by the *protuberancy* of what muſt form the ſignature. In that caſe there would be a likeneſs, *aliquatenus*, that is, an exact correſpondency; but what would then be *convexe* or bulching out in the Seal, would be, as we know, *concave* or *hollow* in the impreſſion. Such is the proportion between *Soveraignty* and *Subjection*, between ſelf-fulneſs, and ſelf-emptineſs. Whereas *a ſimilitude to God, in reſpect of his communicable perfections*, is as that, between the *face* and its *picture*; where no ſuch difference is wont to appear.

10. *Aſſimilation, or conformity to God, in both theſe reſpects, compoſes that excellent frame of moral perfection, which the divine glory, beheld, impreſſes upon the ſoul; and which immediately conduces to its ſatisfaction and bleſſedneſs.* I ſay, *moral perfection*, becauſe that only is capable of being impreſt by the intervening miniſtry of our own underſtanding; *viz.* by its Viſion, intimated, as was formerly obſerved, in that of the Apoſtle, *We ſhall be like----for we ſhall ſee him, &c.* Its *natural perfections* are antecedent, and preſuppoſed, 10.

ſuppoſed, therefore not ſo fitly to be underſtood here. And I ſay, *both theſe ways*; for, as we cannot form an entire *Idea* of God, without taking in, together, his perfections of both ſorts, *communicable*, and *incommunicable*, (the former whereof muſt ſerve inſtead of a *genus*; the latter of a *differentia*, in compoſing the notion of God *): ſo nor will his impreſs on us be entire, without ſomething in it reſpecting both; in the ſenſes already given.

* *Theſ. Salmu. de Deo immenſo.*

What it will contribute to *future bleſſedneſs*, we ſhall ſhortly ſee, in its place, when we have made a brief enquiry (which is the next thing, according to our order propoſed) concerning,

3. Thirdly, *The ſatisfaction that ſhall hence accrue.* Where it will not be beſides our purpoſe, to take ſome notice of the ſignificancy of the word. And not to inſiſt on its affinity to the word uſed for ſwearing, or rather, being ſworn * (which; an oath being the end of controverſies, and beyond which we go no further, nor expect more, in way of teſtifying; would, the more fitly here repreſent to us the ſoul in its *non ultra*; having attained the end of all its motions, and contentions) Its equal nearneſs to the word ſignifying the number of *ſeven*, is not altogether unworthy obſervation. That number is, we know, often uſed in Scripture, as denoting *plenitude* and *perfection*; and God hath, as it were, ſignaliz'd it,

עבע

* Which ſome think to be the Niphal of the ſame word notwithſtanding the different punctation of the ש.

it, by his reſt on the *ſeventh* day: † and if this were not deſignedly pointed at here in the preſent uſe of this word, (as it muſt be acknowledged to be frequently uſed where we have no reaſon to think it is with ſuch an intendment) it may yet occaſion us to look upon the holy ſoul now entered into the eternal Sabbath * the reſt of God: which, (ſecluding all reſpect to that circumſtance) is, yet, the very ſubſtance and true notion of the thing it ſelf (to the conſideration whereof I now paſs) under the word held forth to us.

† How fit a Symbol it is of Gods Sabbatique reſt, ſee Dr. *More's* defence of his Philoſophical *Cabbala* from *Philo. Judæus.*

* *Erit ibi verè maximum Sabbatum, non habens veſperam, quod commendavit Dominus in primis operibus mundi; ut legitur, & requievit die Septimo.... Dies enim Septimus etiam nos ipſi erimus, quando ipſius fuerimus benedictionum & ſanctificationum pleni atque refecti.... ibi vacabimus & videbimus, videbimus & amabimus, amabimus & laudabimus, &c.* Aug. de civit. Dei *l.* 22. *c.* 30. vid. eund. de civit. Dei *l.* 17. *c.* 4.

For this *ſatisfaction*, is the *ſouls reſt in God*; *its perfect enjoyment* of the *moſt perfect good*: the expletion of the whole capacity of its will; the total filling up of that vaſt enlarged appetite; the perfecting of all its *deſires* in *delight* and *joy*. Now delight or joy (for they differ not, ſave that the latter word is thought ſomething more appropriate to reaſonable nature) is fitly defined, *the reſt of the deſiring faculty in the thing deſired* *. Deſire and Delight, are but two acts of *Love*, diverſified, only, by the diſtance, or preſence of the ſame Object: which, when 'tis diſtant,

* *Quies appetitûs in appetibili.* Aquin. Sum.

ſtant, the Soul, acted and prompted by love, deſires, moves towards it, purſues it; when preſent, and attained, delights in it, enjoys it, ſtays upon it, ſatisfies it ſelf in it, (according to the meaſure of goodneſs it finds there). *Deſire*, is therefore, *love in motion*; *Delight*, is *love in reſt*: And of this latter, *Delight* or *joy*, Scripture evidently gives us this Notion, *He will rejoice over thee with joy*, (unto which is preſently added as exegetical), *he will reſt in his love*: Which, *reſting*, can be but the ſame thing with, *being ſatisfied*. Zeph. 3. 17.

This *ſatisfaction* then is nothing elſe but *the repoſe and reſt of the ſoul amidſt infinite delights*: its peaceful acquieſcence, having attained the ultimate term of all its motions, beyond which it cares to go no further: the ſolace it finds in an adequate full good; which it accounts enough for it, and beyond which, it deſires no more; reckons its ſtate as good as it can be, and is void of all hovering thoughts, (which perfect reſt muſt needs exclude,) or inclination to change.

And ſo doth this *being ſatisfied*, not only generally, ſignifie the Soul to be at *reſt*; but it ſpecifies that *reſt*; and gives us a diſtinct account of the nature of it. As, that it is not a *forced violent reſt*; ſuch as proceeds from a beguiled ignorance, a drowſie ſloth, a languiſhing weakneſs, or a deſire and hope of happineſs, by often fruſtrations baffled into *deſpair*, (to all which, the native import and

and propriety of that word [*ſatisfaction*] doth ſtrongly repugn). But it diſcovers it to be a *natural reſt*; I mean, *from an internal principle*. The ſoul is not held in its preſent ſtate of enjoyment by a ſtrong and violent hand: but reſts in it by a connaturalneſs thereunto; is attempered to it, by its own inward conſtitution and frame. It reſts not as a deſcending ſtone, intercepted by ſomething by the way, that holds and ſtops it; elſe it would fall further: but as a thing would reſt in its own centre; with ſuch a reſt as the earth is ſuppoſed to have in its proper place; that, being hung upon nothing, is yet unmoved (*ponderibus librata ſuis*), equally ballanced by its own weight every way.

It is a *rational judicious reſt*; upon certain knowledg, that its preſent ſtate is ſimply *beſt*, and not capable of being changed for a *better*. The ſoul cannot be held under a perpetual cheat, ſo as always to be ſatisfied with a ſhadow: It may be ſo befool'd for a while, but if it remain ſatisfied, in a ſtate that never admits of change; that ſtate muſt be ſuch, as commends it ſelf to the moſt throughly informed reaſon and judgment.

It is hence a *free voluntary choſen reſt*: Such as God profeſſes his own to be in *Zion*; *This is my reſt, here will I dwell, for I have deſired it.* Pſal. 132. 14.

It is a *complacential reſt*, wherein the ſoul abides ſteddy, *bound* only by the cords of

Pſal. 16. 6. בנעימים love; a reſt in the midſt of *pleaſantneſſes*; *The Lord is my portion, the lots are fallen to me* [*in amœnitatibus*]; it cannot be more fitly expreſt than [amidſt pleaſantneſſes]: And this ſpeaks, not only what the Pſalmiſts condition was, but the *ſenſe*, and *account* he had of it. That temper of mind gives us ſome *Idea* of that *contentful, ſatisfied* abode with God, which the bleſſed ſhall have. He intimates, how undeſirous he was of any change. Vet. 4. *Their ſorrows* (he told us above) *ſhould be multiplied that haſten after another God.* Hereafter there will be infinitely leſs *appearance of reaſon* for any ſuch thought. Now, it is the ſenſe of an holy ſoul, *Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none I deſire on earth beſides thee* (q. d. Heaven and Earth yeild not a tempting Object, to divert me from thee): 'tis *now* ſo, at ſome times, when faith and love are in their triumph and exaltation, (but the Lord knows how ſeldom!), but much more *when we ſee him as he is*, and are *ſatisfied with his likeneſs!*

It's an active vigorous reſt. Action *about* the end, ſhall be perpetuated here, though action *towards* it, ceaſes. 'Tis the reſt of an *awak'ned*, not of a *drowſie, ſtupifi'd* ſoul; of a ſoul *ſatisfied*, by heavenly *ſenſations* and *fruitions*: not uncapable of them; or that hath its powers bound up by a ſtupifying ſleep.

Its the reſt of *hope*, perfected in *fruition*, not loſt in *deſpair*; of *ſatisfied*, not *defeated* expecta-

expectation. Deſpair may occaſion reſt to a mans *body*, but not to his *mind*; or a ceſſation from *further endeavours*, when they are conſtantly found vain, but not from *trouble and diſquiet*: It may *ſuſpend from action*, but never *ſatisfie*.

This ſatisfaction therefore ſpeaks both the *reality* and *nature* of the ſouls reſt in glory: *that* it reſts; and with *what kind* of reſt.

I think it not worth the while to engage in the diſpute (ſo much agitated between the *Thomiſts* and *Scotiſts*), Whether bleſſedneſs do formally conſiſt in this ſatisfying fruition, or in the antecedent Viſion: This ſatisfaction is certainly inſeparable from it, and I ſee not how to be excluded out of its formal Notion: 'tis not *viſion*, as *viſion*, but as *ſatisfying*, that makes us happy; and to talk of the ſatisfaction or pleaſure which the *underſtanding* hath in *knowing* is inſipid: while the *ſoul underſtanding*, i. e. *the mind, knows*, 'tis the ſoul enjoying, *i.e.* the *will*, is pleaſed and finds content: and till the ſoul be fully *contented*, it is not bleſſed; and it *is*, by being ſo, when it ſaith, Now am I fully-ſatisfied, I have enough, I deſire no more.

CHAP. V.

The relative *conſideration of theſe three Ingredients of the Saints Bleſſedneſs. Where it is propounded, to ſhew particularly*: 1. *What relation* Viſion *hath to* Aſſimilation. 2. *What* both theſe *have to* Satisfaction. *The relation between the two former, enquired into. An entrance upon the much larger Diſcourſe, What relation and influence the two former have towards the third*: What, Viſion of Gods Face, *or Glory*, contributes towards Satisfaction, *Eſtimated from the conſideration*: 1. *Of the* Object, *the Glory to be beheld*; *as 'tis* Divine, entire, permanent, appropriate.

THUS far have we view'd the parts or neceſſary concurrents, of which the Bleſſedneſs of the Saints muſt be compoſed, *abſolutely*, and *ſeverally* each from other: We proceed,

Secondly, To conſider them *relatively*, *viz.* in the *mutual reſpects* they bear one to another; as they actually compoſe this bleſſed ſtate: Wherein we ſhall ſhew particularly:

1. The

1. The relation (by way of influence, and dependence) between *Viſion*, and *Aſſimilation.*

2. Between both theſe and the *Satisfaction* that enſues: Which latter I intend more to dwell upon; and only to touch the former, as a more ſpeculative, and leſs improvable ſubject of Diſcourſe, in my way to this.

1. Firſt, It may be conſidered, What relation there may be *between Viſion of God*, and Aſſimilation, or *being made like to him*; and it muſt be acknowledged (according to what is commonly obſerved of the *mutual action* of the *underſtanding* and *will*) that the *ſight of God*, and *likeneſs to him*, do *mutually* contribute each towards other. The ſight of God aſſimilates, makes the Soul like unto him; that likeneſs more diſpoſes it for a continued renewed viſion. It could never have attained the beatifical viſion of God, had it not been prepared thereto, by a gradual previous likeneſs to him *. For righteouſneſs (which we have ſhewn qualifies for this bleſſedneſs) conſiſts in a likeneſs to God; and it could never have been ſo *prepared*,

* Which neceſſity of a likeneſs to God to diſpoſe for the viſion of him, is excellently expreſt by a *Platonique* Philoſopher.

The divine nature, the τὸ θεῖον, which he ſaith, is liable to no ſenſe, (μόνῳ δὲ τῷ τῆς ψυχῆς καλλίστῳ καὶ καθαρωτάτῳ, καὶ νοερωτάτῳ, καὶ κυφοτάτῳ, καὶ πρεσβυτάτῳ, ὁρατὸν δὲ ὁμοιότητα, &c.) is yet viſible, to that in the ſoul, which is moſt beautiful, moſt pure, moſt perſpicacious, moſt ſublime, moſt noble, in reſpect of a certain ſimilitude and cognation that is between them. *Max. Tyr.*

had not ſome knowledg of God introduced that conformity and yeilding bent of heart towards him. For the entire frame of the

* Col. 3. 10. *new man,* * *made after the image of God, is renewed in knowledg.*

But as, notwithſtanding the circular action of the underſtanding and will upon one another; there muſt be a beginning of this courſe ſome-where, and the underſtanding is uſually reckon'd the ἡγεμονικὸν, the firſt mover, the leading faculty: So, notwithſtanding the mutual influence of theſe two upon each other, *ſeeing* hath a natural precedency and muſt lead the way unto *being like*; Which is ſufficiently intimated in the Text, [*I ſhall behold thy face*], and then [*I ſhall be ſatisfied with thy likeneſs*;] and more fully in that parallel Scripture: *We ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him, &c.*

From whence alſo, and from the very nature of the thing, we may fitly ſtate the relation of the firſt of theſe to the ſecond, to be that of a cauſe to its effect: *Sight* begets *likeneſs*, is *antecedent* to it, and *productive* of it.

That is, *The face or glory of God ſeen*; that *glory*, in conjunction with our *viſion of it*: For the viſion operates not, but according to the efficaciouſneſs of the thing ſeen; nor can that glory have any ſuch operation, but by the intervention of viſion.

'Tis therefore the *glory of God ſeen*, as ſeen, that aſſimilates, and impreſſes its likeneſs upon the beholding Soul: and ſo its cauſality

cauſality is that of an *objective cauſe* (which whether it belong to the efficient or final, I ſhall not here diſpute) that *operates* only as it is *apprehended*: ſo introducing its own form, and ſimilitude into the ſubject it works upon. Such a kind of cauſe were *Jacobs* ſtreaked rods of the production that enſued; and ſuch a cauſe is any thing whatever, that begets an impreſſion upon an apprehenſive ſubject, by the mediation and miniſtry, whether of the fancy or underſtanding. This kind of cauſality the word hath in its renewing transforming work; and the Sacraments, wherein they are *cauſal* of *real phyſical* mutations on the Subjects of them. So much of the Image of God as is here impreſt upon ſouls by Goſpel diſpenſations, ſo much is impreſt of his glory. The work of grace is glory begun.

And now, as glory *initial*, and *progreſſive* in this life enters at the eye--- (beholding as in a glaſs the glory of the Lord, we are changed) ſo doth perfect and conſummate glory in the other life. For we have no reaſon to imagine to our ſelves any alteration in the natural order the powers of the ſoul have towards each other, by its paſſing into a ſtate of glory. 2 Cor. 3. 18.

The *Object* ſeen, is unſpeakably *efficacious*; the *Act* of intuition is *full of lively vigour*; the *Subject* was prepared, and in a diſpoſition before; and, What ſhould hinder, but this glorious effect ſhould immediately enſue? as the Sun no ſooner puts up his head above

above the Hemiſphere, but all the vaſt ſpace, whither it can diffuſe its beams, is preſently transformed into its likeneſs, and turned into a Region of Light.

What more can be wanting to cauſe all the darkneſs of Atheiſm, carnality, and every thing of ſin, for ever to vaniſh out of the awaking ſoul; and an entire frame of holineſs to ſucceed: but one ſuch transforming ſight of the face of God? One ſight of his glorious *Majeſty* preſently *ſubdues*, and works it to a full ſubjection; one ſight of his *purity* makes it *pure*; one ſight of his *lovelineſs* turns it into *love*: and ſuch a ſight always remaining, the impreſs remains always actually (beſides that it is in it ſelf moſt habitual and permanent in the ſouls now confirmed ſtate) freſh and lively.

The *Object* hath quite another aſpect upon a wicked ſoul, when it awakes; and the *act* of ſeeing is of another kind: therefore no ſuch *effect* follows. Beſides the *ſubject* is otherwiſe diſpoſed, and therefore as the Sun enlightens not the inward parts of an impervious dung-hill, but it enlightens air; ſo the ſight of God transforms and aſſimilates at laſt, not a wicked, but it doth a godly ſoul. That which here makes the greateſt difference, in the temper of the ſubject, is Love. I look upon the face of a *ſtranger*, and it *moves* me not; but upon a *friend*, and his face preſently *transforms* mine into a lively cheerful aſpect. (*As iron ſharpens iron, ſo doth the face of a man his friend*; puts a ſharp-

Prov. 27. 17.

ſharpneſs and a quickneſs into his looks). The ſoul that loves God, opens it ſelf to him, admits his influences and impreſſions, is eaſily moulded, and wrought to his will, yeilds to the transforming power of his appearing glory. There is no reſiſtent principle remaining, when the love of God is perfected in it; and ſo overcoming is the firſt ſight of his glory upon the awaking ſoul, that it perfects *it*, and ſo, his likeneſs, both at once.

But enmity fortifies the ſoul againſt him, as with bars and doors; averts it from him; carries with it an horrid guilty conſciouſneſs; which fills it with eternal *deſpair* and *rage*, and inwraps it in the blackneſs of darkneſs for ever.

2. Both the *viſion* of God, and *likeneſs* to him, muſt be conſidered in their *relation* to the conſequent *ſatisfaction*, and the influence they have in order thereto. I ſay, both; for though this ſatisfaction be not expreſly, and directly referred by the letter of the Text, to the ſight of Gods face, yet its relation thereto, in *the nature of the thing*, is ſufficiently apprehenſible and obvious: both *mediate*, in reſpect of the influence it hath towards the ſatisfying aſſimilation; and *immediate*, (which we are now to conſider), as it is ſo highly pleaſurable in it ſelf; and is plainly enough intimated *in the Text:* being applied, in the ſame breath, to a thing ſo immediately and intimately conjunct with this viſion, as, we find, it is. Moreover, ſuppoſing

poſing, that [*likeneſs*] here, do (as it hath been granted it may) ſignifie *objective* glory alſo as well as *ſubjective*, and repeat what is contained in the former expreſſion, [*the face of God*], the reference ſatisfaction hath to this viſion (which the re-mention of its object, though under a varied form of expreſſion, ſuppoſes) will be more expreſs: Therefore we ſhall ſhew:

1. What the viſion of the divine glory contributes to the ſatisfaction of the bleſſed Soul, and what felicity it muſt needs take herein: Which cannot but be very great, whether we reſpect,

{ The glory ſeen, the object of this viſion, or,
{ The act of viſion, or, intuition it ſelf.

1. The *Object*, the glory beheld: What a ſpring of pleaſure is here? what rivers of
Pſal. 16. 11. pleaſure flow hence? *In thy preſence* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *is fulneſs of joy: at thy right hand are pleaſures for evermore.* The awaking Soul, having now paſt the path of life, (drawn through *Sheol* it ſelf, the ſtate of deadly-head), appears immediately in this *preſence*; and, What makes this *preſence* ſo *joyous*, but the pleaſant brightneſs of this face? To be *in the preſence* of any one, and *before his face*, (*in conſpectu*), are equivalent expreſſions: therefore the Apoſtle quoting
Act. 2. 28. this paſſage, renders it thus, *Thou haſt filled me with gladneſs, by thy* [*countenance*]: Now which indeed is the Seventies reading of the Pſalmiſts words.

ſal

in this glorious preſence, or within view of the face of God, is [fulneſs] of joy, *i. e.* joy unto *ſatisfaction*. And the Apoſtle *Jude* ſpeaking of *this preſence* under this name [*a preſence of glory*] tells us of an *exceeding joy*, a jubilation (an ἀγαλλιασις) that ſhall attend the preſentment of Saints there. The holy Soul *now* enters the divine *Shechinah*, the Chamber of Preſence of the great King, the *habitation of his holineſs and glory*, *the place where his honour dwelleth*. Here his glory ſurrounds it with incircling beams: 'tis *beſet* with *glory*, therefore ſurely alſo *fill'd* with *joy*. When the vail is drawn aſide; or we are *within the vail*; in that very *preſence whither Jeſus the forerunner is for us entred* (through that path of life), O the ſatisfying overcoming pleaſure of this ſight! Now, that, is to us *revealed*, or unvailed glory, which was *hidden* before. Here the *glory ſet in Majeſty* (as the expreſſion is, concerning the glory of the Temple) is preſented to view openly and without umbrage. God is now no longer ſeen through an obſcuring medium. They are not now ſhadowed glimmerings, tranſient, oblique glances, but the direct beams of full-ey'd glory that ſhine upon us. The diſcovery of this glory is the ultimate product of that infinite *wiſdom* and *love*, that have been working from *eternity*, and for ſo many thouſand years, through all the ſucceſſions of time, towards the heirs of ſalvation. The laſt and compleat iſſue, of the great atchievments, ſharp conflicts, glorious victo-

ἀγαλλιασιν τῆς δόξης. ver. 24.

Ezek. 7.

victories, high merits of our mighty Redeemer. All theſe end in the opening of Heaven (the laying of this glory as it were common) to all believers. This is the upſhot, and cloſe of that great deſign: Will it not (think ye) be a ſatisfying glory! The full bleſſedneſs of the redeemed, is the Redeemers reward. He cannot be *ſatisfied* in ſeeing his ſeed, if they ſhould be *unſatisfied*. He cannot behold them with content, if his heart tell him not, that he hath done well enough for them. God would even be aſhamed to be called their God, had he not made proviſion for their entertainment worthy of a God. 'Tis the ſeaſon of Chriſts Triumphs, and Saints are to enter into *His* joy. 'Tis the appointed jubilee, at the finiſhing of all Gods works from the Creation of the world, when he ſhall purpoſely ſhew himſelf in his moſt adorable Majeſty, and when Chriſt ſhall appear in his own likeneſs (he appeared in another likeneſs before); ſurely glory muſt be in its exaltation in that day. But take a more diſtinct account, how grateful a ſight this glory will be, in theſe following particulars,

Heb. 11. 16.

1. It is the *Divine* glory. Let your hearts dwell a little upon this conſideration. 'Tis the *glory of God, i.e.* the glory which the bleſſed God both enjoys and affords, which he contemplates in himſelf, and which rayes from him to his Saints; 'tis the felicity of the *divine Being*. It ſatisfies a Deity, Will it not a worm? 'Tis a glory that reſults and ſhines from

1.

from him; and in that ſenſe alſo divine (which here I mainly intend); the beauty of his own face, the luſtre of Divine perfections; every Attribute bears a part, all concur to make up this glory.

And here pretermitting thoſe which are leſs liable to our apprehenſion; his Eternity, Immenſity, Simplicity, &c. (of which, not having their like in us, we are the more uncapable to form diſtinct conceptions, and conſequently of perceiving the pleaſure, that we may hereafter upon the removal of other impediments, find in the contemplation of them), let us bethink our ſelves, how admirable and raviſhing the glory will be,

1. *Of his unſearchable wiſdom*, which hath *glory* peculiarly annext and properly belonging to it. Glory is as it were, by inheritance, due to wiſdom. The *wiſe* ſhall inherit *glory*. And here, now, the bleſſed Souls behold it in its firſt ſeat, and therefore in its *prime glory*: wiſdom, counſel, underſtanding, are ſaid to be *with* him; as if no where elſe. Twice we have the Apoſtle aſcribing glory to God, under the notion of *only wiſe*; which is but an acknowledging him glorious in this reſpect. Wiſdom, we know, is the proper and moſt connatural glory of *intellectual nature*: whether as it relates to *ſpeculation*, when we call it *knowledg*; or *action*, when 'tis *prudence*.

Prov. 3. 35. Job 12. Rom. 16. 27. 1 Tim. 1. 17.

How pleaſant will the contemplation be, of the divine wiſdom, *in that former Notion*! When in that glaſs, that *ſpeculum æternitatis*, we

we ſhall have the lively view of all that truth, the knowledg whereof can be any way poſſible and grateful to our natures; and *in his light, ſee light*! When all thoſe vaſt treaſures of wiſdom and knowledg, Col. 2. 3. (which already by their alliance to *Chriſt*, Saints are intereſted in) ſhall lye open to us! When the tree of Knowledg ſhall be without encloſure; and the moſt voluptuous Epicuriſm, in reference to it, be innocent! Where there ſhall neither be *luſt*, nor *forbidden fruit*; no *with-holding* of *deſirable* knowledg, nor *affectation* of *undeſirable*! When the *pleaſure* of ſpeculation ſhall be without the *toil*; and that maxim be eternally antiquated, that *Increaſed knowledg increaſes ſorrow*!

As to the other notion of it; How can it be leſs grateful to behold the wiſdom that made, and govern'd the world? that compaſt ſo great deſigns: and this, no longer, in its effects, but in it ſelf? Thoſe *works* were honourable and glorious, ſought of all them that have pleaſure in them: What will be the glory of their *cauſe*? It would gratifie ſome mens curioſity to behold the unuſual motion of ſome rare *automaton*; but an ingenious perſon would, with much more pleaſure, pry into the ſecret Springs of that motion; and obſerve its inward frame, and parts, and their dependence, and order to each other. 'Tis comely to behold the exterior œconomy of a well-govern'd people; when great affairs are, by orderly conduct, brought to happy iſſues;

iſſues: but to have been at the helm; to have ſeen the pertinent, proper application of ſuch and ſuch maxims to the incident caſes; to have known all the reaſons of ſtate; heard debates; obſerv'd, with what great ſagacity, inconveniencies have been foreſeen, and with what diligence prevented: would much more gratifie an enquiring Genius.

When the Records of Eternity ſhall be expoſed to view; all the counſels and reſults of that profound wiſdom lookt into; How will it tranſport! When it ſhall be diſcern'd, Lo! thus were the deſigns laid; here were the apt junctures, and admirable dependencies of things: which, when acted upon the ſtage of the world, ſeem'd ſo perplext, and croſs, ſo full of myſterious intricacy?

If Saint *Paul* were ſo raviſht at thoſe more obſcure appearances of divine wiſdom, which we find him admiring, *Rom.* 11. 33, *O the depths!* &c. What ſatisfaction will it yeild, to have a perfect model, of the deep thoughts and counſels of God, preſented to open view! How is the happineſs of *Solomons* Servants magnified, that had the priviledg continually to *ſtand before him, and hear his wiſdom*! But this happineſs will be proportionably greater; as *Solomons God* is greater than *he*.

2. The glory of his *Power* will add comlineſs to the Object of this Viſion. Power duly placed and allay'd is lovely. Beauty conſiſts much in a Symmetry or proportion of parts. So muſt there be a concurrence of divine perfections, to compoſe and make 2.

up the beautiful complexion of his face; to give us a *right aſpect*, the *true Idea* of God. And here his power hath a neceſſary ingrediency. How incoherent, and diſagreeing with it ſelf, were the notion of an *impotent God?* His *power* gives lively ſtrokes to his glory. 'Tis called *glorious power*, or the *power of glory*: Yea, 'tis *ſimply* called *glory it ſelf*; The Apoſtle tells us, *Chriſt was raiſed from the dead by the* [*glory*] *of the Father*, when 'tis plain he means [*power*]: And the ſame Apoſtle prays, on the behalf of the *Epheſians*, that God would grant them according to the *riches of his glory* to be ſtrengthened with *might*, &c. How frequently are *power* and *glory* aſcribed to him in conjunction? intimating that, *as* he is *powerful*, he is *glorious*. And certainly, even *this glory*, cannot but caſt a grateful aſpect upon the bleſſed Soul, and be infinitely pleaſant to behold. What triumphs doth it now raiſe in gracious Spirits, to behold the *exertions of it in his works*; to read its *deſcriptions in his word*; while as yet he *holds back the face of his throne*, while the countenance of inthroned Majeſty cannot be ſeen: when ſo little a portion is heard of him, and the thunder of his *power* ſo little underſtood! The infinitely fainter Rayes of this power in a creature; power in that unſpeakable diminution and abatement; that derived, precarious power, when 'tis innocently uſed, is obſerved with pleaſure: Here is *power* in the *throne*, power in its chief and higheſt ſeat; eſſen-

κράτος τῆς δόξης. Col. 1. 11.

Rom. 6. 4.

Chap. 3. 16.

Job 26. 9.

Ver. 14.

eſſential, and ſelf-originated power; the root and fountain, the very Element of power; power in its proper ſituation, in its native place, to which it belongs. *God hath ſpoken once, twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God.* It languiſhes in a Creature, as in an alien Subject. *If I ſpeak of ſtrength; lo he is ſtrong* (ſaith *Job*). *q. d.* Created power is not worth the ſpeaking of; Here is the power, that deſerves the name, that is ſo indeed. How ſatisfying a pleaſure will this afford, to contemplate this *radical power*? this all-creating, all-ruling power? the principle of all action, motion, and life, throughout the whole Creation? This will be as natural a pleaſure, as the Child takes in the Mothers boſom, and in embracing the womb that bare it. How grateful to behold, whence the vaſt frame of nature Sprang! what ſtretcht out the Heavens, eſtabliſhed the Earth, ſuſtained all things? what turned the mighty Wheels of Providence, throughout all the ſucceſſions of time; what ordered, and changed times and ſeaſons; chained up Devils, reſtrained the outrages of a tumultuous world, preſerved Gods little Flock! eſpecially, what gave Being to the new Creation, (*The exceeding greatneſs of power that wrought in them that believed*, &c.) what made hearts love God, embrace a Saviour; what it was that overcame *their own*, and made them a willing people in that memorable day!

Pſal. 62. 11. power to *Hebr.* God. Job 26. Eph. 1 19, 20. Pſal. 110. 3.

How delightful a contemplation to think,

with ſo inlarged an underſtanding, of the *poſſible* effects of this power; and, ſo far as a creature can range into infinity, to view *innumerable creations*, in the *creative power* of God!

And yet how pleaſant to think, not only of the extents, but of the reſtraints of this power; and how, when none could limit, it became *ordinate*, and did limit it ſelf; that, ſince it could do ſo much, it did no more; turned not ſooner a degenerous world into flames: withheld it ſelf from premature revenge, that had abortiv'd the womb of Love, and cut off all the hopes of this bleſſed Eternity that is now attained! This alſo ſpeaks the *greatneſs of power*: Let *the power of my Lord be great, according as thou haſt ſpoken, the Lord is gracious, long-ſuffering, &c.* This was his mightieſt power, whereby he overcame himſelf: *Fortior eſt qui ſe*, &c.

Poſſe & nolle nobile.

Numb. 14. 17, 18.

3. 3. And what do we think of the raviſhing aſpects of his *Love*! when it ſhall, now, be *open-fac'd*, and have laid aſide its vail! when his amiable ſmiles ſhall be checkered with no intermingled frowns; the light of that pleaſing *countenance* be obſcured by no intervening cloud! when *goodneſs* (which is love iſſuing into benefaction, or doing good) *grace* (which adds freeneſs unto goodneſs) *mercy* (which is grace towards the miſerable) ſhall conſpire in their diſtinct, and variegated appearances to ſet off each other, and enhance the pleaſure of the admiring ſoul! when the wonted doubts ſhall all ceaſe,

and

and the difficulty vaniſh, of reconciling (once neceſſary) *fatherly ſeverity* with *Love*! when the full ſenſe, ſhall be unfolded to the life, of that deſcription of the divine nature, *God is Love*: and the ſoul be no longer put to read the love of God in his *name* (as *Moſes* was when the *ſight* of his *face* could not yet be obtained); ſhall not need to ſpell it by letters and ſyllables; but behold it in His very nature it ſelf, and ſee how intimately Eſſential it is to the *divine Being*! How glorious will this appearance of God be, (we, now, hear ſomething of the *glory of his grace*) and how ſatisfying the intuition of that glory! Now is the proper ſeaſon for the full exerciſe and diſcovery of Love. This day hath been long expected, and lo, now, 'tis dawned upon the awaking ſoul: It's now called forth; its ſenſes unbound; all its powers inſpirited, on purpoſe, for love-viſions and enjoyments; 'tis now to take its fill of loves. The Apoſtles extatical prayer is now anſwered to the higheſt degree poſſible with reſpect to ſuch an one. He is now *according to the riches of divine glory, ſtrengthened with might, by the Spirit, in the inner man---to comprehend with all Saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; to know the love that paſſeth knowledg*, &c. He ſhall now no longer ſtand amazed, ſpending his gueſſes, *What manner of love this ſhould be*; and expecting fuller diſcoveries, further effects of it, *that did not yet appear*: but ſees the utmoſt, all that his ſoul can hear, or wiſh

Eph. 1.6.

Eph. 3 16, 17, 18, 19.

to ſee. He hath now traced home the rivulets to their fountain, the beams to the very Sun of Love. He hath got the proſpect, at laſt, into that heart, where the great thoughts of love were lodg'd from everlaſting; where all its counſels and deſigns were formed. He ſees what made God become a man; what cloathed a Deity with humane fleſh; what made Eternity become the birth of time
Gal. 4. 4. (when come to its parturient *fulneſs*); what mov'd the heart of the Son of God to pitch his Tabernacle among men; what engaged him to the enterprize of redeeming ſinners; what mov'd him ſo earneſtly to conteſt with a periſhing world, led him at laſt to the Croſs, made him content to become a ſacrifice to God, a ſpectacle to Angels and men, in a bitter reproachful death, inflicted by the Sacrilegious hands of thoſe whom he was all this while deſigning to ſave. The amazed ſoul now ſees into the bottom of this deſign; underſtands why it ſelf was not made a prey to Divine revenge: whence it was, that it periſh't not in its enmity againſt God; that he was not provoked, by the obſtinacy of its diſobedience, and malice of its unbelief, beyond the poſſibility of an atonement; why he ſo long ſuffered its injurious neglects of him, and unkind repulſes of a merciful Saviour; and perſwaded, till at laſt he overcame, made the averſe heart yeild, the careleſs diſaffected ſoul cry out, Where is my God? Now a Chriſt or I periſh? All this is now reſolved into *love*; And the adoring

doring ſoul ſees how well the effects agree to their cauſe, and are owned by it. Nothing but heaven it ſelf that gives the *ſenſe*, can give the *notion* of this pleaſure.

4. Nor will the glory of *holineſs*, be leſs reſplendent; that great Attribute which even in a remote deſcent from its original, is frequently mentioned with the adjunct of *beauties*. What lovelineſs will thoſe *beauties* add to this *bleſſed face*! Pſal. 110. 3. &c.

Not here to inſiſt (which is beſides my purpoſe) upon the various notions of holineſs: *Real holineſs* Scripture ſtates in *purity*, an alienation from ſin; 'tis ſet in oppoſition to all filthineſs, to all moral impurity; and in that notion it beſt agrees to God; and comprehends his *righteouſneſs*, and *veracity*, and, indeed, whatever we can conceive in him, under the notion of a moral excellency. 2 Cor. 7. 1.

This may therefore be ſtil'd a tranſcendental attribute, that as it were runs through the reſt, and caſts a glory upon every one: 'Tis an attribute of attributes; Thoſe are fit predications, *holy power*, *holy truth*, *holy love*, &c. And ſo it is the very luſtre, and glory of his other perfections; *He is glorious in holineſs*. Hence in matters of greateſt moment, he is, ſometimes, brought in *Swearing by his holineſs*, (which he is not wont to do by any one ſingle attribute,) as though it were a fuller expreſſion of himſelf, (an *adequatior conceptus*) *than* any of the reſt. Exod. 15. 11. Pſal. 89. 35. Amos 4. 2.

What is of ſo great account with him, will not be of leaſt account with his holy ones, when they appear in his glorious preſence. Their own holineſs is a conformity to his; the likeneſs of it. And as their beholding it, forms them into that likeneſs: ſo that likeneſs makes them capable of beholding it with pleaſure. Divine holineſs doth, *now*, more *raviſh* than *affright*. This *hath* been the language of ſinful duſt, *Who can* 1 Sam. 6. *ſtand before this holy God?* when holineſs hath appeared arm'd with terrors, guarded with flames, and the Divine Majeſty been repreſented as a conſuming fire. Such apprehenſions ſin and guilt naturally beget: *The ſinners of Sion were afraid.* But ſo far as the new man is put on, created after God, and they, who were darkneſs, are made light in the Lord, he is not under any notion more acceptable to them, than as he is the *Holy one*. They love his *Law*, becauſe *holy*; and love *each other*, becauſe *holy*; and *hate themſelves*, becauſe they are no more ſo. Holineſs hath ſtill a pleaſing aſpect when they find it in an Ordinance, meet it in a Sabbath; every glimpſe of it is lovely. But with what triumphs hath the holineſs of God himſelf been celebrated even by Saints on earth? *Who is a God like unto thee, glo-* Exod. 15. 11. *rious in holineſs! There is none holy as the* 1 Sam. 2. 2. *Lord, for there is none beſides thee. Sing unto the Lord, all ye Saints of his, and give* Pſal. 30. 4. 97. 12. *thanks at the remembrance of his holineſs.* What thoughts

thoughts will they have of it, * when their eyes can behold that glory; when they immediately look on the *archetypal holineſs*, of which, their own is but the *image*; and

* *Si ergo pulchritudo divina nondum viſa, ſed ſolùm creditа & ſperata, tantum ignem deſiderii excitat: Quid faciet cùm, remoto velo, ut eſt in ſe conſpicitur? Omninò id faciet ut torrente voluptatis illius inebriati, neque velimus, neque poſſimus, vel ad punctum temporis, oculos ab eâ divertere.* Bellarm. de aſcenſ. mentis ad Deum, grad. 2.

can view that glorious pattern, they were ſo long in framing to? How joyfully will they then fall in with the reſt of the heavenly hoaſt; and join in the ſame adoration and praiſe, in the ſame acclamation, and triumphant ſong, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth!* How unconceivable is the pleaſure of this ſight; when the αὐτὸ καλὸν, the *firſt pulchritude*, the original beauty offers it ſelf to view! Holineſs is *intellectual beauty*; Divine holineſs is the moſt perfect, and the meaſure of all other; And what is the pleaſure or ſatisfaction, of which we ſpeak, but the perfection and *reſt* of love? Now *Love, as love, reſpects, and connotes, a pulchritude in its object.* And then the moſt perfect pulchritude, the *ineffable, and immortal pulchritude, that cannot be declared by words, or ſeen with eyes*, (they are an Heathens * expreſſions concerning it,) how can it but *perfectly*, and eternally pleaſe and ſatisfie?

* *Max. Tyr. diſſert.* 11.

Il. Iliad.

And

And we are told by the great Pagan *Theologue* *, in what ſtate, we can have the felicity of that ſpectacle. Not in our preſent ſtate; When we have, indeed, but obſcure repreſentations, of ſuch things as are, with ſouls, of higheſt excellency: But when we are aſſociated to the *bleſſed quire* †. When we are delivered from the body, (which we now carry about, *as the Oyſter doth its ſhell* *). When we are no longer ſenſible of the evils of time. When we wholly apply our ſelves to that bleſſed Viſion; are admitted to the beholding of the ſimple permanent ſights; and behold them, † being our ſelves pure, in the pure light: Then have we the view of the *bright ſhining pulchritude*, &c.

* *Plato in Phædro paſſim.* (Though he there ſpeak theſe things as the memoirs of his ſuppoſed præ-exiſtent ſoul).

† εὐδαίμονι χορῷ.

* ὀστρέου τρόπον.

† ἐν αὐγῇ καθαρᾷ, καθαροὶ ὄντες, κάλλος λαμπρόν.

2. It is an *entire* or *united* glory. We have ſomething of the divine glory ſhining, now, upon us: but the many interpoſitions cauſe a various refraction of its light. We have but its diſperſed rayes, its ſcattered disſhevel'd beams: we ſhall then have it perfect and full. 'Tis the eternal glory we are hereafter to behold.

Eternity (as the notion of it is wont to be ſtated) is a duration that excludes

both { *Succeſſion*, and *End*.

And

And if it be an unſucceſſive duration, (though it is more difficult to apprehend how the being or enjoyments of a creature can come under that menſuration, or how there can be any ſuch,) the glory preſented to the view of a bleſſed Soul, cannot be preſented by parcels, but at once. * In our temporary ſtate, while we are under the meaſure of time, we are not capable of the *fulneſs* of bleſſedneſs, or miſery; for time exiſts not all together, but by parts. And indeed we can neither enjoy, nor ſuffer more, at once, than can be compaſt within one moment; for no more exiſts together. But our relation to eternity (according to this notion of it) will render the ſame invariable appearance of glory, always preſentaneous to us, in the entire fulneſs of it. We read indeed of certain ὑστερήματα πίστεως, *afterings of Faith* (as it may be ſignificantly enough rendred, let but the novelty of the expreſſion be pardoned), *things lacking* we read it; but there will be here no ὑστερήματα δόξης, *afterings of glory.* What is perfect admits no increaſe; 'tis already full: and, Why ſhould not a full glory ſatisfie? There's here no expectation of (greater) *future*, to abate the pleaſure of *preſent*, diſcoveries: Why therefore ſhall not this *ſatisfaction* be conceived full and perfect? It muſt be the *fulneſs of joy.*

* *Æternitas eſt interminabilis vitæ tota ſimul & perfecta poſſeſſio.* Boeth.

1 Theſ. 3. 10.

3. 'Tis *permanent* glory; a never fading, unwithering glory, (ἄφθαρτος, ἀμάραντος) glory

3. 1 Pet. 1. 3.

2 Cor. 4. 17. 2 Tim. 2. 10. 1 Pet. 5. 10. Iſa. 60. 14. Pſal. 16. 11.

ry that will never be ſullied, or obſcured, never be in a declination. This bleſſed face never grows old; never any wrinkle hath place in it. 'Tis the *eternal glory* (in the other part of the notion of *eternity*) as it imports an endleſs duration, neither ſubject to *decay*, in *it ſelf*, nor to injury, or impairment *from without*. As ſtable as the divine Being; [*Thy God, thy Glory; the Lord thy everlaſting light*]: If that have have a *true* ſenſe with reſpect to any ſtate of the Church *militant on earth*, it muſt needs have a more *full* ſenſe, in reference to it *triumphing in heaven*. As, therefore, *full*, entire glory affords *fulneſs of joy*; *permanent, everlaſting* glory affords *pleaſures for ever more*.

4. An *appropriate* glory, even to them 'tis ſo; a glory wherein they are really intereſſed. 'Tis

> The glory of their God,
> And their happineſs is deſigned to them from it.

They are not unconcern'd in it, as 'tis *the glory of God*. It cannot but be grateful to them, to behold the ſhining glory of *their God*; whom they feared, and ſerved before, while they could have no ſuch ſight of him. That glory of his was, once, under a cloud, concealed from the world, wrapt up in obſcurity: It, now, breaks the cloud, and juſtifies the fear and reverence

fence of his Faithful and Loyal Servants, againſt Atheiſtical Rebels, that feared him not. 'Tis infinitely pleaſing to ſee *him* now ſo glorious, whom they thought to have a glory beyond all their conceptions before; while others would not think ſo of him, but judg'd it ſafe to ſlight, and ſet him at nought. Subjects ſhare in their Princes glory, Children in their Fathers. But beſides that collateral intereſt, that intereſt by reflection,

They have a more direct intereſt in this glory. A true and real right: upon a manifold title, The Fathers gift, Sons purchaſe, Holy Ghoſts obſignation, and earneſt; The Promiſes tender; their Faiths acceptance; their Fore-runners prepoſſeſſion: Yea 'tis their *inheritance*; they are Children, and therefore Heirs, Heirs of God, and joint-Heirs with Chriſt, *to the ſame glory with him.* They are, by him, received to the glory of God, *called to his Kingdom and glory.* Will it not contribute exceedingly to their ſatisfaction, when they ſhall look upon this glory, not as unconcern'd ſpectators, but as intereſſed perſons; *This is my happineſs, to behold and enjoy this bleſſed God?* What a rapturous expreſſion is that, *God our own God ſhall bleſs us*; and that, *Thy God thy glory!* Upon intereſt in God, follows their intereſt in *his glory and bleſſedneſs*: Which is ſo much the dearer, and more valuable, *as it is theirs: Their glory*, from *their*

Rom. 8. 17. ch. 15. 7. 1 Theſ. 2. 12.

Pſal. 67. 6.

their God. They ſhall be bleſſed by *God*, *their own God*; *Drink waters out of their own well.* How endearing a thing is propriety! Another mans ſon is ingenious, comely, perſonable, this may be matter of envy; but *mine own is ſo*, this is a joy. I read in the life of a devout Nobleman of *France* *, that receiving a Letter from a friend, in which were inſerted theſe words, *Deus meus, & omnia*; *My God, and my all:* he thus returns back to him, "I know not "what your intent was, to put into your "letter theſe words, *Deus meus, & omnia*; "*My God, and my all:* Only you invite me "thereby to return the ſame to you, and "to all creatures; *My God, and my all*; *my "God, and my all*; *my God, and my all*: If "perhaps you take this for your Motto, "and uſe it to expreſs how full your heart "is of it; think you it poſſible, I ſhould "be ſilent upon ſuch an invitation, and "not expreſs my ſenſe thereof? Likewiſe, "be it known unto you therefore, that he "is *My God, and my all*; and if you doubt "of it, I ſhall ſpeak it an hundred times "over. I ſhall add no more; for any thing "elſe is ſuperfluous, to him that is truly "penetrated with *My God, and my all*: I "leave you therefore in this happy ſtate "of jubilation; and conjure you, to beg "for me, of God, the ſolid ſenſe of theſe "words.

Monſieur de Renti.

And do we think, *My God, and my all,* or

or *My God, and my glory*, will have loſt its emphaſis in heaven? or that 'twill be leſs ſignificant among awaked ſouls? Theſe things concur then, concerning the *Object*: 'tis moſt excellent (even *divine*), *entire*, *permanent*, and *theirs*: How can it but ſatisfie?

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

What the Viſion of Gods Face contributes to the Souls ſatisfaction, *Eſtimated from the conſideration of the* Act of Viſion *it ſelf. Wherein this pleaſure ſurpaſſes that of* ſenſe. *A compariſon purſued more at large, between this* intuition *and* diſcourſe *between* it *and* Faith. *This intuition more* abſolutely *conſidered: Its Characters, and what they contribute to the ſatisfaction of the bleſſed Soul: That 'tis* (viz.) efficacious, comprehenſive, fixed, appropriative.

2. 2. THE *act* of *viſion*, or *intuition* it ſelf. How great the pleaſure will be that accrues to the bleſſed from this ſight of Gods face, is very much alſo to be eſtimated from the *nature of the act*, as well as *the excellency of the object*. In as much as every vital act is *pleaſant*, the *moſt perfect* act of the nobleſt faculty of the Soul, muſt needs be attended with *higheſt pleaſure*. 'Tis a pleaſure that moſt nearly imitates divine pleaſure. And every thing is more perfect, as it more nearly approaches divine perfection.

Res ſunt perfectiores vel imperfectiores prout à ſumma perfectione magis vel minimè abſcedunt.

Intel-

Intellectual pleaſure is as much nobler than that of ſenſe; as an immortal Spirit is more noble than a clod of earth. The pleaſure of ſenſe is droſſie, feculent, the pleaſure of the mind refined, and pure; *that* is faint and languid, *this* lively and vigorous; *that* ſcant and limited, *this* ample and enlarged; *that* temporary and fading, *this* durable and permanent; that flaſhy, ſuperficial, *this* ſolid and intenſe; *that* raving and diſtracted, *this* calm and compoſed. Whence even that great (reputed) ſenſualiſt, *Epicurus* himſelf, profeſſedly diſclaims (or is repreſented as diſclaiming) the conceit of placing happineſs in ſenſual delights.

Pet. Mollin. de cognitione Dei. See *Culverwel of the light of nature*, ſpeaking (as I remember) to this purpoſe, c. 17. *Quocirca & cùm univerſæ voluptatem beatæ vitæ eſſe finem dicimus; longè profectò abſumus, ut eas voluptates, quæ ſunt virorum luxu diſſolutorum, aut aliorum etiam, quatenus ſpectantur in ipſa motione, actionéve fruendi; quâ nimirum ſenſus jucundè delectéque afficitur, intelligamus: veluti quidam rem ignorantes, aut à nobis diſſentientes, aut alioquin adverſùm nos malè affecti, interpretantur; Sed illud duntaxat (ut res iterum dicatur) intelligimus: non dolere corpore; animo non perturbari.* Gaſſend. Syntag. Philoſ. Epicur. See his Epiſtle to Menoceus in D. Laert.

And, as the pleaſure of intellection excels all the pleaſure of ſenſe; ſo doth the pleaſure of intuition, excel all other intellectual pleaſure. Let us to this purpoſe, but conſider, generally, this way of knowing things, and compare it with thoſe two other ways, by { Diſcourſe, / Faith.

1, *Diſcourſe.* I mean (that I be not miſtaken by the vulgar Reader) the *diſcourſe*

of the mind or *ratiocination*; that way of attaining the knowledg of things, by comparing one thing with another, conſidering their mutual relations, connexions, dependencies; and ſo arguing out, what was more doubtful and obſcure, from what was more known and evident.

To the altogether unlearned it will hardly be conceivable; and to the learned it need not be told, how high a gratification this employment of his Reaſon naturally yeilds to the mind of a man: When the harmonious contexture of truths with truths; the apt co-incidence, the ſecret links and junctures of coherent notions, are clearly diſcerned: When *effects* are traced up to their *cauſes*; *Properties* lodged in their native *ſubjects*; *Things* fitted to their *Principles*. What a pleaſure is it, when a man ſhall apprehend himſelf regularly led on (though but by a ſlender thred of diſcourſe) through the Labyrinths of Nature; when ſtill new diſcoveries are ſucceſsfully made, every further enquiry ending in a further proſpect, and every new Scene of things entertaining the mind with a freſh delight! How many have ſuffered a voluntary baniſhment from the world, as if they were wholly ſtrangers, and unrelated to it; rejected the blandiſhments of ſenſe; macerated themſelves with unwearied ſtudies, for this pleaſure: making the eaſe and health of their bodies, to give place, to the content and ſatisfaction of their minds!

Felix qui potuit rerum cognoſcere cauſas.

But how much intuition hath the advantage,

tage, above this way of knowledg, may be ſeen in theſe two obvious reſpects.

1. *'Tis a more facile way of knowing.* Here is no need of a buſie ſearch, a tireſome indagation, (the difficulty whereof makes the more ſlothful, rather truſt than try,) a chaining together of conſequences. The Soul hath its cloathing (its veſtment of light) upon as cheap terms as the Lillies theirs; doth neither toil nor ſpin for it: And yet *Solomon*, in all the glory of his (famed) wiſdom, was not array'd like it. This knowledg ſaves the expence of ſtudy; is inſtantaneous, not ſucceſſive: The ſoul now ſees more, at one view, in a moment, than before in a lifes-time: As a man hath a ſpeedier, and more grateful proſpect of a pleaſant Country, by placing himſelf in ſome commodious ſtation, that commands the whole Region, than by travelling through it. 'Tis no pains to look upon what offers it ſelf to my eye. Where there is a continued ſeries of conſequences, that lye naturally connected, the ſoul pleaſingly obſerves this continuity; but views the whole frame, the whole length of the line, at once (ſo far as its limited capacity can extend), and needs not diſcuſs every particle, ſeverally, in this ſeries of truths, and proceed gradatim, from the knowledg of one truth to another; in which caſe only one, at once, would be preſent to its view. It ſees, things *that are* connected, not *becauſe they* are ſo: As a man, conveniently plac't in ſome eminent ſtation, may poſſibly

Nonnulli tadio inveſtigandæ veritatis, cuilibet opinioni potius ignavi ſuccumbunt; quàm in explorandâ veritate, pertinaci diligentiâ, perſeverare volunt. Min. Felix. Oct. 9.

* *Atque ut homini ſedenti ad ripam fluminis, ſola aqua præſens eſt quæ ei hoc temporis punctulo obſervatur; eidem verò homini, totum flumen præſens eſſet, ſi ſupra ſummam aeris regionem erectus, unà aſpectu fontem & oſtium fluminis poſſet aſpicere: Ita oculo Dei, &c.* P. Molinæus de cognit. Dei.

ſee, at one view, all the ſucceſſive parts of a gliding ſtream *: but he that ſits by the waters ſide, not changing his place, ſees the ſame parts, only becauſe they ſucceed; and theſe that paſs, make way for them that follow, to come under his eye: So doth a learned man deſcribe the unſucceſſive knowledg of God; of which the glorified ſouls way of knowing, is an *imitation*; as the very words *ſeeing* and *beholding* (which it is ſo frequently ſet forth by in Scripture) do naturally import. Yet that, as to them, all ratiocination ſhall be excluded that ſtate, I ſee no reaſon to admit; though with God it can have no place. And, as he is reckon'd to live a pleaſanter life, that ſpends upon a plentiful Eſtate; than he that gets his bread by the ſweat of his brows: ſo this more eaſie way of knowing, muſt needs be reckon'd more pleaſing. This knowledg is as *Jacob*'s Veniſon, not hunted for, but brought to hand. The race is not here to the ſwift. The unlearned Ideot knows as much as the profoundeſt Rabbi (at leaſt with as much ſatisfaction); and all arms are of an equal ſize, or are content with their own meaſure.

Herbert.

2. *'Tis more certain.* For what do we uſe to reckon ſo certain as what we ſee with our

our eyes? *Better* (even in this reſpect) *is the ſight of the eyes, than the wandring of the deſire.* While, *here*, the mind is carried, with moſt earneſt deſire, to purſue knowledg, it very often miſtakes its way, and miſerably wanders. In our moſt wary ratiocinations, we many times ſhoot at rovers; But when we know by *this* Viſion, our mark is immediately preſented to our eye. We are in no danger to be impoſed upon by deluſive appearances of things. We look through no fallacious mediums, are held in no ſuſpence, puzled with no doubts, whether ſuch conſequences will hold, ſuch concluſions be rightly infer'd; and ſo are not retarded from giving a preſent unwavering aſſent. Here are no perplexing intricacies, no dubious hallucinations, or uncertain gueſſes. We ſee things, as they are, by a ſimple and undeceiving light, with both *ſubjective*, and *objective certainty*, being ſecure both from *doubt*, and *error*.

2. *Faith.* How magnificent things doth Scripture ſpeak of this grace! which the experience alſo of ſuch as have been wont to live by it (*i.e.* to make it the governing principle of their lives) doth abundantly confirm. How clear are its apprehenſions? *'tis the evidence of things not ſeen*: How ſweet its enjoyments? *whom not ſeeing ye love; and though now you ſee him not, yet believing, ye rejoice, with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory.* ἔλεγχος Heb. 11. 1. 1 Pet. 1. 8.

Even the Heathen Theology hath magni-

ſied it above knowledg, "What is it (ſaith "one) that unites us with the ſelf-good-"neſs, and ſo joins us thereto, that it quiets "or gives reſt to all our action and moti-"on? I will expreſs it in one word; 'tis "faith it ſelf, which unſpeakably and after "a hidden manner, doth unite and conjoin "happy ſouls with the ſelf-good. For (ſaith "he) it concerns us not, either in a way of "Science *, or with any imperfection, to "enquire after the good; but to behold our "ſelves in the divine light, and ſo ſhutting "our eyes, to be placed in the unknown "and ſecret unity of beings.

* ἡ γνωστικῶς, οὐδὲ ἀτελῶς, ἀλλ' ἐπιδέντας ἑαυτοὺς τῷ θείῳ φωτί, &c. *Proclus in Plat. Theol.*

And a latter writer gives us this, as a concluſion from that former Author. That as *Faith*, which is *credulity*, is below *Science*; ſo that *Faith*, which is truly ſo called, is, ſuper-ſubſtantially, above Science and intelligence, immediately uniting us to God.

Picus Mirand.

But 'tis evident, *intuitive* knowledg far exceeds even *Faith* alſo.

1. 'Tis *more diſtinct* and *clear*. Faith is taking a thing upon report; *Who hath believed our report?* And they are more *general*, *languid* apprehenſions, we have of things this way. Faith enters at the ear; *it comes by hearing*. And if we compare the perceptions of theſe two external ſenſes; that of *hearing*, and *ſight*: the latter is unſpeakably more *clear*, and ſatisfying. He that hath knowledg of a forreign Country, only by report of another, hath very indiſtinct apprehenſi-

Iſa. 53. 1.

Rom. 10. 16.

ons,

ons of it, in compariſon of him who hath travel'd it himſelf. While the Queen of *Sheba* only *heard* of *Solomons* glory, ſhe could not ſatisfie her ſelf, without an αὐτοψία, the ſight of her own eye; and, when ſhe ſaw it, ſhe ſaith, the one half was not told her of what ſhe now beheld. The Ear more ſlowly and gradually receives, and the Tongue more defectively expreſſes, to another, an account of things; than ones ocular inſpection would take it in. But, as to the excellency of this intuitive knowledg above Faith; the compariſon lies not, between knowing by the miniſtry of a more noble ſenſe, and a leſs noble; but knowing by dependance on a leſs noble, and without dependence upon any at all. When God hath been pleaſed to afford diſcoveries, in that way of Viſion, to men in the body, (his Prophets, &c) he hath uſually bound up their ſenſes, by ſleep, or trances; ſenſe hath had no part or lot in this matter; Unto believing it muſt neceſſarily concur.

2. *More affective.* What we ſee, even with our external eye, much more powerfully moves our heart, than what we only give credit to, upon hear-ſay. The Queen of *Sheba* much admired, no doubt, *Solomons* famed ſplendor, and magnificence, while ſhe only heard of it; but when ſhe ſaw it, it puts her into an extaſie; it raviſh'd away her ſoul; *ſhe had no more ſpirit, &c.* What would the ſight of the Divine glory do, if God did not ſtrengthen *with all might*: were there

not as well *glorious power* to *ſupport*, as *powerful glory* to *tranſform!*

Job had *heard of God, by the hearing of the ear*, but when *once his eye ſaw him*, (whether that were by the appearance of any ſenſible glory; which is probable enough, for 'tis ſaid, *the Lord anſwered him out of the whirlwind:* or whether by a more immediate revelation, 'tis leſs-material) what work did it make in his ſoul!

The Devils *believe*, and tremble; ſo impreſſive are the pre-apprehenſions of Judgment to come, and the conſequents thereof, with them; yet their preſent torment, thence, is no torment, in compariſon (*art thou come to torment us before the time?*) of what they expect. Let wicked men conſider this, (they will have their intuition in hell too); Were your belief, and terror thereupon, with reference to the eternal Judgment, and the impendent wrath of God, equal to what the Devils themſelves have, upon the ſame account; actual ſenſation will make you more exceed your ſelves in point of miſery, than the Devils do now exceed you. There is, no doubt, a proportionable difference between the impreſſions of preſent Faith, and future Viſion, with holy Souls. Now, *not ſeeing, yet believing, they rejoice, with joy unſpeakable:* Their preſent joy cannot be *ſpoken*; their future then cannot be *thought!* Experience daily tells us; how greatly, ſenſible, preſent objects have the advantage upon us, beyond thoſe that are ſpiritual and diſtant,

diſtant, though infinitely more excellent and important. When the tables are turned, the now ſenſible things diſappear; a new ſcene of things inviſible and eternal, is immediately preſented to our view; when the excellency of the objects, the diſpoſedneſs of the ſubjects, the nature of the act, ſhall all multiply the advantages on this part, How affective will this viſion be; beyond what we have ever found the faint apprehenſions of our ſo much diſadvantaged faith to amount to? A kind meſſage, from an indulgent Father, to his far-diſtant Son, informing of his welfare, and yet continuing love, will much affect; but the ſight of his Fathers face, will even tranſport, and overcome him, with joy.

But further conſider this intuition a little more particularly and abſolutely in it ſelf. So, you may take this ſomewhat diſtincter account of it, in ſome few particulars, correſponding to thoſe, by which the object, (the glory to be beheld,) was lately characterized.

1. *It will be a vigorous efficacious intuition*; as that which it beholds is *the moſt excellent*; *even the divine glory*. Such an object cannot be beheld, but with an eye full of lively vigour; a ſparkling, a radiant eye: A weak eye would be ſtruck blind, would fail, and be cloſed up at the firſt glance. We muſt ſuppoſe, then, this viſion to be accompanied with the higheſt vitality, the ſtrongeſt energy, a mighty plenitude of Spirit,

rit, and Power; no leſs than the divine: Nothing but the *divine power* can ſufficiently fortifie the Soul to behold *divine glory*. When the Apoſtle ſpeaks only of his deſire of glory, *he that hath wrought us to this ſelf-ſame thing* (ſaith he) *is God*; he that hath moulded us, ſutably framed us (as the word ſignifieth) for this thing, *is God*: 'tis the work of a Deity to make a Soul deſire Glory: certainly then, 'tis his work to give the power of beholding it. And by how much the more of *power*, ſo much the more of *pleaſure*, in this Viſion. *Weak ſight* would afford but *languid joy*: But when the whole Soul, animated with divine *power* and life, ſhall ſeat it ſelf in the eye; when it ſhall be, as it were, *all eye*, (as one ſaid of God, whom now it perfectly imitates) and be wholly intent upon Viſion; apply it ſelf thereto with all its might, as its only buſi-
S. Hieronym. neſs; What ſatisfying joys doth it, now, taſte! renewed by every repeated view! How doth it now, as it were, prey upon glory; as the eye of the Eagle upon the beams of the Sun! We meet with the expreſſion of *aures bibulæ*; here, will be *oculi bibuli*, thirſty eyes: A Soul ready to drink in glory at the eye. If viſion be by intromiſſion, what *attractive eyes* are here, drawing in glory, feeding upon glory? If by extramiſſion, what piercing darting eyes, *ſending forth* the Soul at every look to embrace the glorious object?

There is a great power that now attends *real-*

reallizing thoughts of God: whether it appear in the conſequent working of the Soul directly towards God; or by way of reflection upon it ſelf. If directly towards God; how mightily is he admired! *Who is a God like unto thee?* If by reflection upon our own ſin, and vileneſs; how deeply doth it humble! —*Now mine eye ſeeth thee, therefore I abhor my ſelf—Wo is me, I am undone,—Mine eyes have ſeen the Lord of glory.* If by way of reflection, upon our intereſt in him, or relation to him; how mightily doth it ſupport and comfort! *I will look to the Lord,— my God will hear me.* How full of rich ſenſe is that Scripture, *They looked to him, and were lightned*! One look cloath'd them with light, caſt a glory upon their ſouls, filled them with life and joy: 'twas but a thought, the caſt of an eye, and they were as full as hearts could hold. O, the power then of theſe heavenly viſions! when we dwell in the views of that transforming glory! Mic. 7. 7. Pſal. 34. 5

2. *This will be a comprehenſive intuition*; as its object is *entire glory*. I mean comparatively, not abſolutely comprehenſive. More of the divine glory will be comprehended, unſpeakably, than before. 'Tis called, we know, by the Schoolmen, the knowledg of *Comprehenſors*, in contradiction to that of *Viators*. We ſhall better be able to diſcern the divine excellencies *together*; have much more adequate conceptions; a fuller, and more compleat notion of God: We ſhall ſee him *as he is*. 'Tis too much obſervable, how 2.

how in our preſent ſtate, we are prejudiced by our partial conceptions of him; and what an *inequality* they cauſe in the temper of our Spirits.

For wicked men, *the very notion they have of God*, proves fatal to their Souls, or is of a moſt deſtructive tendency; becauſe they comprehend not *together* what God hath revealed of himſelf. Moſt uſually, they confine, thoſe few thoughts of God they have, only to his mercy; and that excluſively, as to his holineſs, and juſtice; Hence their vain and mad preſumption. The notion of an *unholy* (or a not-holy, and not-juſt) God, what wickedneſs would it not induce? *Thou thought'ſt I was altogether ſuch an one as thy ſelf*: a God after their own hearts; then the reins are let looſe. More rarely, when the conſcience of guilt hath arreſted the ſelf-condemned wretch, God is thought of, under no other notion, than of an irreconcileable enemy and avenger; as one thirſting after the blood of Souls, and that will admit of no atonement: So without all pretence, and ſo flatly contrary to all his diſcoveries of himſelf, do men dare to affix to him black and horrid characters, forged only out of the radicated and inveterate hatred of their own hearts againſt him, (that never takes up good thoughts of any one): only becauſe they have no mind to acquaint themſelves with him; and that they may have ſome colour for their affected diſtance: and ſo, perhaps, never return; but periſh under

der an horrid, wilful deſpair.

And even the people of God themſelves are too apt, ſometimes, ſo wholly to fix their eye upon *love*, and *grace*, that they grow into an unbecoming, uncreaturely familiarity; while the thoughts of Infinite Majeſty, adorable greatneſs, and glory are aſleep: ſometimes, poſſibly, apprehend vindictive juſtice, the indignation and jealouſie of God againſt ſin, (precluding meanwhile, the conſideration of his indulgent compaſſions towards truly humble and penitent Souls) to that degree of affrightment, and dread; that they grow into an unchildlike ſtrangeneſs towards him, and take little pleaſure in drawing nigh to him.

But when, *now*, our eye ſhall take in the diſcovery of divine glory *equally*; how ſweet, and ſatisfying a pleaſure will ariſe from that grateful mixture of *reverent love, humble joy, modeſt confidence, meek courage, a proſtrate magnanimity, a triumphant veneration; a ſoul ſhrinking before the divine glory into nothing, yet not contenting it ſelf with any leſs enjoyment, than of him, who is all in all!*

There's nothing here in this complexion, or temper of Soul, but hath its warrant, in the various aſpect of the face of God comprehenſively beheld; nothing but what is (even by its ſutableneſs) highly grateful, and pleaſing.

3. *'Twill*

3. *'Twill be fixed, steady intuition*, as its object is *permanent glory*. The vision of God can neither *infer*, nor *admit* weariness. The eye cannot divert; its act is eternally delectable; and affords an unvariable, undecaying pleasure. Sensual delights soon end in loathing; quickly bring a glutting surfet; and degenerate into torments, * when they are continued and unintermittent. A Philosopher in an Epistle which he writes to a friend, from the Court of *Dionysius*, where he was forceably detained, thus bemoans himself, "We are unhappy, *O Antisthenes*, beyond measure; and how can "we but be unhappy, that are burdened by "the Tyrant every day, with sumptuous "feasts, plentiful compotations, precious ointments, gorgeous apparel? and I knew as "soon as I came into this Island and City, "how unhappy my life would be. This is the nature and common condition of even the most pleasing sensible objects: They first tempt, then please a little, then disappoint, and lastly vex. The eye that beholds them, blasts them, quickly rifles and deflowers their glory; and views them with no more delight at first, than disdain afterwards. Creature enjoyments have a bottom, are soon drained and drawn dry: hence there must be frequent diversions; other pleasures must be sought out; and are chosen, not because they are *better*, but because they are *new*.

* *Proba istas, quæ voluptates vocantur, ubi modum transcenderint, pœnas esse.* Sen. Ep. 83. Κακοδαιμονοῦμεν ὦ ἀντίσθενες, ὁ μετρίως, &c. Socraticorum Epist. 9.

This demonstrates the emptiness, and vanity

nity of the Creature. *Affectation of variety* only proceeds from *ſenſe of want*; and is a confeſſion, upon trial, that there is not, in ſuch an enjoyment, what was expected.

Proportionably, in the ſtate of glory, A conſtant indeficient *fulneſs*, renders the bleſſed Soul undeſirous of any change. There, is no need of varieties, or diverſions: What did once pleaſe, can never ceaſe to do ſo. This glory cannot fade or loſe any thing of its attractive power. The *faculty* cannot languiſh, or loſe the diſpoſition, by which it is contempered and made proportionable thereto: Hence no wearineſs can enſue. What! a Soul in which the love of God is perfected, grow weary of beholding him! The Sun will ſooner grow weary of ſhining; The touch'd Needle of turning its ſelf to its wonted point; Every thing will ſooner grow weary of its centre; and the moſt fundamental Laws of Nature be ſooner antiquated, and made void for ever.

The eye of the fool, Solomon tells us, *is in the ends of the earth*; *His* only, is a rolling wandring eye, that knows not where to fix. Wiſdom guides, and fixes the eye of the holy Soul; determines it unto God only: *I will bleſs the Lord, who hath given me counſel, my reins alſo inſtruct me,---I have ſet the Lord always before me.* Surely heaven will not render it leſs capable of *dijudication*; of paſſing a right judgment of the excellency

Prov. 17. 25.

Pſal. 16. 7. 8.

lency and worth of things. And, here, a *rational* judgment will find no *want*; and an *irrational* will find no *place*. Therefore, as *permanent* glory will certainly infer a *perpetual* viſion; perpetuated viſion will as certainly perpetuate the ſouls ſatisfaction, and bleſſedneſs.

4. *'Twill be a poſſeſſive intuition*: as 'tis an *appropriate glory* which it pitches upon. 'Twill be the language of *every look*, *This glory is mine*. The Soul looks not upon it ſhily, as if it had nothing to do with it; or with ſlight, and careleſs glances: but the very poſture of its eye, ſpeaks its intereſt, and proclaims the pretentions it hath to this glory. With how different an aſpect, doth a *ſtranger*, paſſing by, and the *owner*, look upon the ſame houſe, the ſame lands? A mans eye lays his claim for him, and avowes his right. A grateful object that one can ſay is *his own*, he arreſts it with his eye: So do Saints with appropriative looks, behold their God, and the Divine Glory. Even with ſuch an eye as he was wont to behold them;

Iſa. 66. 1, 2. *To this man will I look*, &c. (that is, as the place of my reſt, mentioned before); he deſigns him with his eye. Which is the im-

2 Tim. 2. 19. port of that expreſſion, *The Lord knows who are his*; his eye marks them out; owns them as his own: as concerning others, whom he *diſowns*, the phraſe is, *I know you not*. And how vaſtly different is ſuch an intuition, from that, when I look upon a thing, with an hungry lingring eye, which I muſt never enjoy,

enjoy, or never expect to be the better for? This *viſion* is *fruitive*; unites the Soul with the bleſſed object: Which kind of ſight is meant, when actual bleſſedneſs is, ſo often, expreſt, by ſeeing God.

We ſee then what Viſion, the ſight of Gods face, contributes to the ſatisfaction of bleſſed Souls.

CHAP. VII.

Wherein aſſimilation (*the likeneſs or glory of God impreſt*) contributes unto ſatisfaction: *Where is particularly propounded to be ſhewn; What pleaſure it* involves, *what it* diſpoſes to: *What it involves in the* eſſe *of it, what in the* cognoſci. 1. *The pleaſure of* being like God, *diſcovered.* 1. *Shewing, concerning the Image of God* (generally conſidered), *that it is the Souls health and ſoundneſs reſtored; that it is a* Vital, *an* intimate, *a* connatural, *a* perfect *image.*

2. OUR next buſineſs, is, to diſcover, what *aſſimilation*, or the *impreſſed likeneſs of God*, may further add to this ſatisfied ſtate; or, what ſatisfying pleaſure the bleſſed Soul finds, in this, that it is *like God.*

And here we are diſtinctly to enquire into, The pleaſure which ſuch an *aſſimilation to God* { *involves in it ſelf,* / *tends,* and *diſpoſes to.*

1. *The*

1. *The pleaſure it involves in it ſelf*; or, which is taken in it, abſtractly conſidered; Which we may more particularly unfold, by ſhewing,

The pleaſure involved, { 1. In being like God. 2. In knowing or reflecting upon the ſame.

The { *Eſſe*, *Cognoſci* } *Of this aſſimilation.*

1. *The pleaſure in being like God*; Which may be diſcovered both by a *general* conſideration hereof, and by inſtancing in ſome *particulars*, wherein bleſſed Souls ſhall be like him. 1.

1. It is obvious to ſuppoſe an inexpreſſible pleaſure, in the very feeling, the inward ſenſation, the holy Soul will have of that happy frame *in general*, whereinto it is now brought. That joyful harmony, that entire rectitude it finds within it ſelf. You may as ſoon ſeparate light from a Sun-beam, as pleaſure from ſuch a ſtate.

This likeneſs, or conformity to God is an ἰσχυρία, a perfect temperament; an athletique healthineſs; a ſtrong ſound conſtitution of Soul: Do but imagine, what it is to a mans body, after a waſting ſickneſs, to find himſelf *well*. Frame a notion of the pleaſure of health and ſoundneſs, when both, all the parts and members of the body are in their proper places and proportions; and a live-

ly, active vigour, a sprightly strength possesses every part, and actuates the whole: how pleasant is this temper! If we were *all body*, there could be no greater felicity than this. But by how much the more noble any creature is, so is it capable of more exquisite pains, or pleasures. * Sin is the sickness and disease of the Soul; enfeebles all its powers, exhausts its vigour, wasts its strength. You know the restless tossings, the

* Τιμιώτερον ψυχὴ σώματος, τὸ δὲ τιμιώτερον ἀγαθὸν μεῖζον, τὸ δὲ τῷ μείζονι, ἀγαθῷ ἐναντίον, μεῖζον κακόν: ἀγαθὸν δὲ μεῖζον ὑγεία ψυχῆς ὑγείας σώματος, μεῖζον οὖν κακὸν, νόσος ψυχῆς, νόσου σώματος. νόσος ψυχῆς μοχθηρία, &c. *Max. Tyr. dissert.* 41.

weary rollings to and fro, of a diseased languishing body; such is the case of a sinful Soul. Let it but seriously bethink it self, and then speak its own sense, (but here is the malignity of the disease, it cannot be serious, it always raves;) What will it be? *O I can take no rest*;) (The way of wickedness is called * *a way of pain*: Sinners would find it so, if the violence of the disease had not bereft them of sense; *Nothing savors with me; I can take comfort in nothing. The wicked is as a troubled Sea* (as their name imports) *that cannot rest, whose waters*, &c. The Image of God, renewed in holiness and righteousness, is health restored, after such a consuming sickness; which, when we awake, when all the drowsiness that attends our disease is shaken off, we find to be perfect. *The fear of the Lord* (an ordinary Paraphrase of

* דרך עצב Psal. 139. 24. רשע Isa. 57. 20. *Hinc illud & tadium & displicentia sui & nusquam residentis animi volutatio &c.* Sen. de Tranqu. animi.

of holineſs or piety) is ſaid to be *health to the navel, and marrow to the bones.* Our Lord Jeſus invites *wearied ſinners to come to him, to take his yoke on them, to learn of him,* (that is, to imitate him, to be like him) and promiſes they *ſhall find reſt to their ſouls.* How often do we find *grace*, and *peace*, in conjunction, in the Apoſtles ſalutations and benedictions? We are told that the ways of divine wiſdom (*i. e.* which it preſcribeth) are all *pleaſantneſs and peace.* That in keeping the *Commandments* of God, *there is great reward.* That *they are not grievous*, i. e. (for there ſeems to be a Meioſis in the expreſſion) are joyous, pleaſant. And what are his Commandments, but thoſe expreſſes of himſelf, wherein we are to be *like him*, and conform to his will? *The Kingdom of God* (that holy order which he ſettles in the ſpirits of men; his Law tranſcribed and impreſt upon the Soul; which is nothing elſe but its conformation and likeneſs to himſelf) *is righteouſneſs, and* then *peace.* The φρονημα πνευματος. That *notion*, and *judgment*, and *ſavour* of things; that excellent temper of mind and heart; (for that is the extent of the expreſſion) whereof the holy Spirit of God is both the author and pattern, is *life, and peace*; involves them in it ſelf. When one thing is thus, in *caſu recto*, predicated of another, it ſpeaks their moſt intimate connexion, as *Rom.* 14. 17, above; ſo 1 *Joh.* 5. 3, *This is love that*, &c. So here, ſuch a *mind*, is *life and peace*, (though the *copula* be not in the original,

Pro. 3. 13. Pſal. 19. 1 Joh. 5. 3. Rom. 14. 17. Rom. 8. 6.

ginal, it is fitly ſupply'd in the tranſlation); You cannot ſeparate (*q. d.*) life, and peace from ſuch a mind: It hath no principle of death, or trouble in it. Let ſuch as know any thing of this bleſſed temper, and complexion of Soul, compare this Scripture, and their own experience together; when, at any time, they find their Souls under the bleſſed Empire, and dominion of a Spiritual mind; when ſpirituality wholly rules and denominates them: Are not their Souls the very region of life and peace? both theſe in conjunction, *life* and *peace*? not raging life, not ſtupid peace; but a placid peaceful life, a vital vigorous reſt and peace: 'tis not the life of a fury, nor peace of a ſtone: life that hath peace in it, and peace that hath life in it. Now can the Soul ſay, *I feel my ſelf well*; All is now well with me. Nothing afflicts the Spiritual mind, ſo far, and while 'tis ſuch: 'Tis wrapt up, and cloath'd in its own innocency, and purity; and hereby become invulnerable, not liable to hurtful impreſſions. Holineſs (under the name of light, for that is, by the context, the evident meaning of the word there) is by the Apoſtle ſpoken of as the Chriſtians *armour*. *Put on*, ſaith he, *the armour of light* (in oppoſition to the works of darkneſs which he had mentioned immediately before;) *Strange armour*! that a man may ſee through. A good mans armour is, that *he needs none*: his armour is an open breaſt; that he can expoſe himſelf, is fearleſs of any harm. *Who is he that ſhall*

Invulnerabile eſt non quòd non feritur, ſed quòd non lædítur. Sen. de conſtantiâ Sapientis, ſive quòd in ſapientem non cadit injuria.

Rom. 13. 12.

Integer vitæ ſceleriſque purus, &c. Hor. Muſſal.

hurt

harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? It ſhould be read, *imitators*; ſo the word ſignifies: And ſo, whereas *following*, is either of a *pattern*, or an *end*; the former muſt be meant here, by the natural importance of that word. And hence, by [*that which is good*] is not to be underſtood *created goodneſs*; for it is not enough to *imitate* that goodneſs; for ſo we muſt *be* good; But the words are capable of being read, *him that is good*, or (which is all one) *the good.* Τῦ ἀγαθῦ.

* And ſo 'tis the *increate good*, the bleſſed God himſelf, formally conſidered, under the notion of good. Nothing can harm you; if you be *like God*; that's the plain ſenſe of this Scripture. Likeneſs to God, is armour of proof, *i.e.* an imitation of him, *viz.* in his moral goodneſs; which holineſs (as a general name of it) comprehends. A perſon truly like God, is ſecure from any external violence; ſo far, as that it ſhall never be able to invade his Spirit. He is, in Spirit, far raiſed above the tempeſtuous, ſtormy Region; and converſes where winds and clouds have no place.

* As Plato and his followers uſed the expreſſion, τὸ ἀγαθὸν, fully, according to the ſenſe of *Mat.* 19. 17.

Nor can (ſo far as this temper of Soul prevails) any evil grow up to ſuch a mind within it ſelf. *It is life and peace*; It is *light*, and *purity*; for 'tis the image, the ſimilitude of God. *God is light, and with him is no darkneſs at all.* Holy Souls *were darkneſs, but they are light in the Lord.* He the Father of lights, *They the children of light. They were darkneſs*; not, in the dark; but, (in the 1 Joh. 1. Eph. 5. Jam. 1.

the abſtract) [darkneſs]: as if that were their whole nature; and they nothing elſe, but an impure maſs of conglobated darkneſs. So, *Ye are light*: as if they were, *that*, and nothing elſe; nothing but a Sphere of light.

Σφαῖρα ψυχῆς αὐτοειδὴς ὅταν μήτε ἐκτείνηται ἐπί τι, μήτε ἔσω συντρέχῃ, μήτε συνιζάνῃ, ἀλλὰ φωτὶ λάμπηται, &c. *Marc. Antonin.* lib. 11.

Why, ſuppoſe we ſuch a thing, as an entire Sphere of nothing elſe but pure light, What can work any diſturbance here? or raiſe a ſtorm within it? A calm, ſerene thing: perfectly homogeneous, void of contrariety, or any ſelf-repugnant quality: How can it diſquiet it ſelf?

We cannot yet ſay, that thus it is, with holy Souls in their preſent ſtate, according to the higheſt literal import of theſe words, *Ye are light*: But thus it will be, when they awake; when they are ſatisfied with this likeneſs. They ſhall then be like God fully, and throughout. O the joy and pleaſure of a Soul made after ſuch a ſimilitude! Now glory is become as it were *their being*; they are glorified. *Glory is revealed into them*, transfuſed throughout them. Every thing that is conceivable under the notion of an excellency, competent to created nature, is now to be found with them; and they have it inwrought into their very beings. So that in a true ſenſe it may be ſaid (that *they are light*); they not only *have* ſuch excellencies, but

but they *are* them. As the Moraliſt ſaith of the wiſe, or virtuous man, that he not ſo properly *hath* all things, as *is* all things. 'Tis ſaid of man, in reſpect of his *naturals*, he *is* the image *and glory of God*. As for his *ſupernatural excellencies*; though they are not *eſſential to man*, they are more *expreſſive of God*; and are now become ſo *inſeparable* from the nature of man too, in this his glorified ſtate, that he can aſſoon ceaſe to be *intelligent*, as *holy*. The image of God, even in this reſpect, is not ſeparable from him: nor bleſſedneſs (ſurely) from this image. As the divine excellencies, being in their infinite fulneſs in God, are his own bleſſedneſs: ſo is the likeneſs, the participation of them in the Soul, that now bears this image, its bleſſedneſs. Nothing can be neceſſary to its full ſatisfaction, which it hath not in it ſelf, by a gracious vouchſafement, and communication. *The good man* (in that degree which his preſent ſtate admits of), *Solomon* tells us, *is ſatisfied from himſelf*: he doth not need to traverſe the world, to ſeek his happineſs abroad; he hath the matter of ſatisfaction (even that goodneſs which he is now enrich't with) in his own breaſt and boſom: Yet he hath it all by participation from the *fountain-goodneſs*. But that *participated goodneſs* is ſo intimately one with him, as ſufficiently warrants and makes good the aſſertion, *He is ſatisfied from himſelf*: *viz.* from himſelf; not *primarily*, or *independently*; but by *derivation* from him, *who is all in all*, and *more intimate to us*, *than we*

Omnia non tam habere quam eſſe. Sen.

1 Cor. 11. 7.

Prov. 14. 14.

Intimo noſtro intimior. Eſſe noſtrum ſemper habile. Gibieuf. de libertate, ex Plat. & Aug.

we to our ſelves. And what is that participated goodneſs, but a degree of the *divine likeneſs*? But, when that goodneſs ſhall be fully participated; when this image, and imitation of the divine goodneſs, ſhall be compleat, and intire; then ſhall we know the rich exuberant ſenſe of thoſe words. How fully will this image or likeneſs ſatisfie then?

And yet more diſtinctly, we may apprehend, how ſatisfying this likeneſs (or image impreſt), will be, if (a little further deferring the view of the particulars of this likeneſs which we have deſigned to inſtance in) we conſider theſe general properties of it,

1. *'Tis a vital image*: not the image only of him that lives, *the living God*: but it is his *living* and ſoul-quickning image. 'Tis the likeneſs of him, in that very reſpect; an imitation, and participation of the life of God; by which, once revived, the Soul lives, that was dead before. 'Tis not a dead picture, a dumb ſhew, an unmoving Statue; but a living, ſpeaking, walking image: that wherewith the Child is like the Father: the very life of the ſubject where it is; and by which it lives *as God*, ſpeaks and acts conformably to him. An image, not ſuch a one as is drawn with a Pencil, that expreſſes only colour, and figure; but ſuch a one as is ſeen in a Glaſs, that repreſents life, and motion (as was noted from a worthy Author before). 'Tis even (in its firſt and more imperfect draught) an analogical participation

Sic oculos ſic ille manus, ſic ora ferebat.

tion (as we muſt underſtand it) of the *divine* nature; before which firſt tincture (thoſe preludious touches of it upon the Spirit of man), his former ſtate is ſpoken of, as an *alienation from the life of God*; as having no intereſt, no communion therein. The *putting on of the new man, which after God is created in righteouſneſs, and true holineſs*, is preſently mentioned, in direct oppoſition to that diſmal ſtate: implying *that*, to be a participation of the divine life. And certainly ſo far as it is ſo, 'tis a participation of the divine bleſſedneſs too. 2 Pet. 1. 4. Eph. 4. 18. v. 23, 24.

2. *'Tis an image moſt intimate, to its ſubject.* Glory it is: but not a ſuperficial skin-deep glory; ſuch as ſhone in *Moſes* his face, which he covered with a Vail. 'Tis *throughly transformative*; changes the Soul throughout; not in external appearance, but in its very nature. All outward imbelliſhments, would add little felicity to a putrid corrupt Soul. *That* would be but painting a Sepulchre: *This* adds *ornament* unto *life*; and both, eſpecially, to the inward man. 'Tis not *paint* in the *face*, while *death* is at the *heart*; but 'tis the radication of ſuch a principle within, as will ſoon form and attemper the man univerſally to it ſelf. 'Tis glory, bleſſedneſs *participated*, brought home and lodged in a mans own Soul, in his own boſom; he cannot then but be ſatisfied. A man may have a rich ſtock of outward comforts, and while he hath no heart to enjoy them, be never the happier. But 'tis impoſſible,

poſſible, that happineſs ſhould be thus lodged in his Soul, made ſo intimate, and one with him; and yet, that he ſhould not be ſatisfied, not be happy.

3. *An image connatural to the Spirit of man.* Not a thing *alien*, and forraign, to his nature, put into him purpoſely, as it were, to torment and vex him; but an ancient well-known inhabitant, that had place in him from the beginning. Sin is the injurious intruder; which therefore puts the Soul into a commotion, and permits it not to' reſt, while it hath any being there. This Image calms it, reſtores it, works a peaceful, orderly compoſure, within; returns it, to it ſelf, to its priſtine bleſſed ſtate; being reſeated there, as in its proper, primitive ſubject.

For though this image, in reſpect of corrupted nature, be *ſupernatural*; in reſpect of inſtitute, and undefiled nature, it was, in a true ſenſe, *natural* (as hath been demonſtrated by divers of ours againſt the Papiſts; and, upon the matter, yeilded by ſome of the more moderate, among themſelves *). At leaſt it was *connate* with humane nature, *conſentaneous* to it, and *perfective* of it. (We are ſpeaking, it muſt be remembred, of that part of the divine Image, that conſiſts in moral excellencies; there being another part of it, as hath been ſaid, that is, even in the ſtricteſt ſenſe, natural).

* As may be ſeen by comparing what *Eſtius* ſays to the two queſtions, 1. *An gratia fuerit primo homini naturalis?* 2. *Utrum originalis juſtitia fuerit homini ſupernaturalis?* l. 2. diſt. 25.

There

There is nothing in the whole moral Law of God, (in conformity whereunto this Image did, *ab origine*, conſiſt,) nothing of what he requires from man; that is at all deſtructive of his being, prejudicial to his comforts, repugnant to his moſt innate principles: nothing that claſhes with his reaſon, or, is contrary to his intereſt: or, that is not, moſt directly, conſervative of his being, and comforts, agreeable to his moſt rational principles, ſubſervient to his beſt and trueſt intereſt. For what *doth God the Lord require*, *but fear and love*, ſervice, and holy walking, from an entire and undivided Soul? What? but what is good; not only, in it ſelf, but for us: and, in reſpect whereof, his Law is ſaid, to be *holy, juſt, and good.* Deut. 10. 12. Mic. 6. 8. Rom. 7. 12.

And what he *requireth*, he *impreſſeth*. This *Law, written in the heart*, is this *likeneſs*.

How grateful then will it be, when, after a long extermination and exile, it returns and re-poſſeſſes the Soul; is re-cognized by it, becomes to it *a new nature*, (yea even a divine), *a vital, living Law, the Law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus?* What grievance, or burden is it to do the dictates of nature? actions that eaſily and freely flow from their own principles? and, when bleſſedneſs it ſelf is infolded in thoſe very acts and inclinations? How infinitely ſatisfying and delightful will it be, when the Soul ſhall find it ſelf connaturallized to every thing of its duty; and ſhall have no other duty incumbent on Rom. 8. 2.

it than to be happy! when it ſhall need no arguments, and exhortations to love God; nor need be urged and preſt, as heretofore, to mind him, to fear before him! when love, and reverence, and adoration, and praiſe; when delight, and joy, ſhall be all natural acts: Can you ſeparate this, in your own thoughts, from the higheſt ſatisfaction?

4. *This image will be, now, perfect*: Every way, fully perfect.

Firſt, *In all its parts*; as it is in the firſt inſtant of the Souls entrance into the ſtate of regeneration, (the womb of Grace knows no defective maimed births). And yet here is no little advantage, as to this kind of perfection. For now thoſe lively lineaments of the new creature *all appear*, which were much obſcured before; every line of glory is conſpicuous; every character legible; the whole entire frame of this Image is, in its exact Symmetry and apt proportions, viſible at once. And 'tis an unſpeakable addition to the pleaſure of ſo excellent a temper of Spirit, that accrews from the diſcernable entireneſs of it. Heretofore, ſome gracious diſpoſitions have been to ſeek (through the preſent prevalence of ſome corruption or temptation) when there was moſt need and occaſion for their being reduced into act. Hence the reward and pleaſure of the act, and improvement of the principle were loſt together. Now, the Soul will be *equally diſpoſed*, to every holy exerciſe that ſhall be ſutable to its ſtate. Its temper ſhall be *even*, and *Symmetral*;

metral; Its motions *uniform*, and agreeable: Nothing done out of ſeaſon; Nothing ſeaſonable omitted, for want of a preſent diſpoſition of Spirit thereto. There will be, not only, an *habitual*, but *actual entireneſs*, of the frame of holineſs, in the bleſſed Soul.

2. Again, this Image will be *perfect in degree*; ſo as to *exclude* all degrees of its contrary; and *include* all degrees of it ſelf. There will now be no longer any colluctation with contrary principles; no law in the members warring againſt the law of the mind; no luſtings of the fleſh againſt the Spirit. That war is now ended, in a glorious victory, and eternal peace. There will be no remaining blindneſs of mind, nor error of judgment, nor perverſneſs of will, nor irregularity or rebellion of affections: no ignorance of God, no averſation from him, or diſaffection towards him. This likeneſs removes all culpable *diſſimilitude* or *unlikeneſs*. This communicated glory fills up the whole Soul, cauſes all clouds and darkneſs to vaniſh, leaves no place for any thing that is vile or inglorious; 'tis pure glory, free from mixture of any thing that is alien to it.

And it is it ſelf *full*. The Soul is repleniſh't, not with airy, evanid ſhadows; but with ſubſtantial, ſolid glory, a maſſie, weighty glory, (for I know not but ſubjective glory may be taken in within the ſignificancy of that known Scripture; if it be not more principally intended: in as much as 2 Cor. 4. 17.

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the Text ſpeaks of a glory, to be wrought out by afflictions, which are the files and furnaces, as it were, to poliſh or refine the Soul into a glorious frame.) 'Tis cumulated glory, glory added to glory. Here, 'tis growing progreſſive glory; *we are changed into the ſame image from glory to glory.* It ſhall, now, be ſtable, conſiſtent glory; that carries a ſelf-fulneſs with it (which ſome include alſo in the notion of purity*): 'tis *full of its ſelf*, includes every degree requiſite to its own perfection. God hath now put the laſt hand to this glorious Image, added to it its ultimate accompliſhments. Now, a conformity to Chriſt, even in the reſurrection from the dead, in his glorious ſtate, is fully attained. That prize of the high calling of God is now won. And the humble ſenſe of not having *attained as yet*, and of not being *already perfect* (in which humility, the foundation of the Temple of God in a Saint, is laid, and the building raiſed) is turned into joyful acclamations, *Grace, Grace!* for the laying on of the top-ſtone, the finiſhing of this glorious work.

2 Cor. 3. 18.

* *Parum eſt quod eſt plenum ſui, & quod minimum habet alieni.*

And when this Temple is filled with the glory of the Lord, the Soul it ſelf repleniſhed with the divine fulneſs; will not its joy be full too? For here is no ſacrifice to be offered, but that of praiſe, and joy is the proper ſeaſoning for that ſacrifice.

Now, the new creature hath arrived, to *the meaſure of the ſtature* of a perfect man in Chriſt Jeſus. The *firſt formation* of this

this Spiritual (as well as of the natural) man, was hidden and ſecret, it was curiouſly wrought, and in a way no more liable to obſervation, than that of framing the Child in the Womb: as that is as hidden as the concoction of Minerals, or precious ſtones, in the lower parts of the earth, (no ſecrets of Nature can outvye the Myſteries of godlineſs). Its *growth* is alſo by very inſenſible degrees; as it is with the products of nature: but its arrival to perfection is infinitely more ſtrange, than any thing in nature ever was. How ſudden and wonderful is the change; when, in the twinkling of an eye, the bleſſed Soul inſtantly awakes, out of drowſie languiſhings, and miſerable weakneſs into perfect ſtrength, and vigour!

As a man is, ſo is his ſtrength; and as his ſtrength is, ſo is his joy, and pleaſure. The Sun is ſaid to go forth *as a ſtrong man, rejoicing to run his race.* When a man goes, in the fulneſs of his ſtrength, upon any enterprize; how do his blood and ſpirits triumph beforehand! no motion of hand, or foot, is without a ſenſible delight. The ſtrength of a mans Spirit is, unſpeakably, more than that of the outward man; its faculties and powers more refined and raiſed: and hence are rational or intellectual exerciſes and operations, much more delightful than corporal ones can be. Pſal. 19.

But (ſtill, as the man is, ſo is his ſtrength) 'tis an incomparably greater ſtrength that attends the *heaven-born man.* This man *born*

of God, begotten of God, after his own likeneſs, this *Hero*, this Son of God; was born to Conflicts, to Victories, to Triumphs. While he is yet but in his growing age, *he overcomes the world* (as *Hercules* the Serpents in his Cradle); overcomes the wicked one, and is at laſt more than Conqueror. A mighty power attends godlineſs; *a Spirit of power, and of a ſound mind*: but how much this divine creature grows, ſo much the more like God: and, being perfect, conflicts ceaſe; (he had overcome and won the Crown before). And, now, all his ſtrength runs out into acts of pleaſure. Now, when he ſhall go forth in his might, to love God (as we are required to love him now with all our might) and every act of *praiſe* ſhall be an act of *power*; done with a fulneſs of ſtrength (as 'tis ſaid their praiſes, at the bringing home of the Ark, were with all their might) O! what will the pleaſure be that ſhall accompany this ſtate of perfection! Perfect power and perfect pleaſure are here met, and ſhall for ever dwell together, and be always commenſurate to one another. They are ſo, here, in their imperfect ſtate: our feeble, ſpiritleſs duties, weak, dead prayers; they have no more ſweetneſs than ſtrength, no more pleaſure than power in them. Therefore we are liſtleſs, and have no mind to duties, as we find we are more frequently deſtitute of a ſpiritual livelineſs and vigour therein. When a ſpirit of might, and power goes on with us in the wonted courſe of

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our converſes with God; we then forecaſt opportunities, and gladly welcome the ſeaſon, when it *extraordinarily* occurs, of drawing nigh to him. It cannot be thought, that the connexion, and proportion between theſe, ſhould fail in glory; or that, when every thing elſe is perfect, the bleſſed Soul it ſelf made perfect, even as God himſelf is perfect (in this bearing his likeneſs,) ſhould be unlike him in bliſs; or its ſatisfaction be imperfect. Mat. 5.

CHAP. VIII.

The ſatisfaction *carried* in the glory of God impreſſed, *further ſhew'n by* inſtances; *Certain* particulars *of this impreſſion inſtanc't in*: A dependent frame of Spirit, Subjection, *or ſelf-devoting*, Love, Purity, Liberty, Tranquility.

BUT beſides the *general* conſideration *of this likeneſs*, we ſhall *inſtance* in ſome of the *particular excellencies* comprehended in it, wherein the bleſſed ſhall imitate and reſemble God: whence we may further eſtimate the pleaſure and ſatisfaction, that *being like God* will afford. Only here let it be remembred, that as we all along in this diſcourſe, ſpeak of likeneſs to God in reſpect of *moral excellencies*: ſo by likeneſs to him, in reſpect of *theſe*, we underſtand, not only a *participation*, of thoſe which are *communicable*; but a *correſpondent impreſs* alſo, as to thoſe that are *incommunicable*; as hath been more diſtinctly opened, in the Propoſitions concerning this likeneſs: Which being premiſed, I ſhall give inſtances of both kinds, to diſcover ſomewhat of the inexpreſſible pleaſure of being thus conformed to God.

And

And here, pretermitting the impreſs of knowledg, of which we have ſpoken under the former head of viſion; we ſhall inſtance,

1. *In a dependent frame of Spirit*: which is the proper impreſs of *the divine all-ſufficiency, and ſelf-fulneſs*, duly apprehended by the bleſſed Soul. It is not eaſie to conceive a higher pleaſure, than *this*, competible to a creature, *The pleaſure of dependence*; yea this is an higher than we can conceive. Dependence (which ſpeaks the creatures σχέσιν or habitude to its principle, as the ſubſerviency which imports its habitude to its end) is twofold,

1. *Natural*: which is common and eſſential to all creatures; even when no ſuch thing is thought on, or conſidered by them. The Creatures live, move, and have their beings in God, whether they think of it or no.

2. *Voluntary* or *rational*: which is *de facto, peculiar*; and *de jure*, common, to reaſonable creatures as ſuch. A dependence that is, ἐκ προαιρέσεως, elective; and, with a foregoing reaſon, (which I underſtand by *elective*, not a liberty of doing, or not doing it) and concomitant conſideration of what we do, and animadverſion of our own act: when knowingly and willingly, underſtanding our ſelves in what we do, we *go out of our ſelves, and live in God*. This is the dependence of which I ſpeak. And it cannot but be attended with tranſcendent pleaſure in that other State,

when that knowledg and animadverſion ſhall be clear and perfect: Both, as this dependence imports,

A { Nullifying of ſelf. / Magnifying (I may call it Omnifying) of God, a making him all in all.

As it imports (which it doth moſt evidently), a *ſelf-annihilation*, a *pure nullifying of ſelf*, 'Tis a continual recognition of my own nothingneſs, A momently, iterated confeſſion, that my whole being is nothing, but a meer puff of precarious breath, a bubble rais'd from nothing by the arbitrary *fiat* of the great Creator, reducible, had he ſo pleaſed, any moment, to nothing again. Theſe are true and juſt acknowledgments, and to a well-tempered Soul infinitely pleaſant, when the ſtate of the caſe is throughly underſtood (as now it is), and it hath the apprehenſion clear; how the creation is ſuſtained, how, and upon what terms its own being, life, and bleſſedneſs are continued to it; that it is, by its ſelf, nothing, and that it is, every moment, determinable upon the conſtancy of the Creators Will, that it is not *ſimply nothing*. 'Tis not poſſible, that any thing ſhould hinder this conſideration from being eternally delightful; but that diabolical uncreaturely *Pride*, that is long ſince baniſht Heaven, and that baniſht its very ſubjects thence alſo. Nothing can ſuite that temper but *to be a God*; to be wholly independent; to be its own

own ſufficiency. The thoughts of living at the will and pleaſure of another, are grating; but they are only grating to a proud heart, which, here, hath no place. A Soul naturallized to humiliations, accuſtomed to proſtrations, and ſelf-abaſements, trained up in acts of mortification, and that was brought to glory, through a continued courſe and ſeries of ſelf-denial; that, ever ſince it firſt came to know it ſelf, was wont to depend for every moments breath, for every glimpſe of light, for every freſh influence (*I live, yet not I*---): with what pleaſure doth it, now, as it were vaniſh before the Lord! what delight doth it take to diminiſh it ſelf, and as it were *diſappear*; to contract and ſhrivel up it ſelf, to ſhrink even into a point, into a nothing, in the preſence of the divine glory; that it may be *all in all*! Things are now *pleaſant* (to the ſoul, *in its right mind*) as they are *ſuitable*; as they carry a comlineſs and congruity in them: And nothing, *now*, appears more *becoming*, than ſuch a ſelf-annihilation. The diſtances of *Creator* and *Creature*, of *Infinite* and *Finite*, of a *neceſſary* and *arbitrary* being, of a *ſelf-originated* and a *derived* being, of what was *from everlaſting* and what *had a beginning*; are now better underſtood than ever. And the Soul by how much it is, now, come *nearer* to God, is more apprehenſive of its *diſtance*. And ſuch a frame and poſture doth, hence, pleaſe it beſt, as doth moſt fitly correſpond thereto. Nothing is ſo pleaſing to it, as to be *as it* Gal. 2. 20.

ought. That temper is moſt *grateful* that is moſt *proper*, and which beſt agrees with its ſtate. Dependence therefore is greatly pleaſing, as it is a *ſelf-nullifying thing.* And yet it is, in this reſpect, pleaſing, but as a means to a further end. The pleaſure that attends it, *is higher* and more intenſe, according as it more *immediately* attains that end, *Viz.*

The magnifying and exalting of God: which is the moſt connatural thing to the holy Soul; the moſt fundamental and deeply *impreſt* Law of the new Creature. *Self gives* place, that God may take it; becomes *nothing*, that he may be *all*: it vaniſhes, that his glory may ſhine the brighter.

Dependence gives God his *proper glory.* 'Tis the peculiar honour and prerogative of a *Deity*, to have a world of Creatures hanging upon it, ſtaying themſelves upon it; to be the *fulcrum*, the *centre* of a lapſing Creation. When this dependence is *voluntary* and *intelligent*, it carries in it a more explicite owning and acknowledgment of God. By how much more this is the diſtinct and actual ſenſe of my Soul, *Lord, I cannot live but by thee*: ſo much the more openly and plainly do I ſpeak it out, *Lord*, thou art *God alone*; thou art *The fulneſs of life and being*; *The only root and ſpring of life*; *The Everlaſting I AM*; *The being of beings.*

How unſpeakably pleaſant, to a holy Soul, will ſuch a perpetual agnition or acknowledgment of God be! when the perpetuation

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of its being, ſhall be nothing elſe than a perpetuation of this acknowledgment; when every renewed aſpiration, every motion, every pulſe of the glorified Soul, ſhall be but a repetition of it; when it ſhall find, it ſelf, in the eternity of life, that everlaſting ſtate of life which it now poſſeſſes, to be nothing elſe than an everlaſting teſtimony *that God is God: He is ſo; for, I am, I live, I act, I have the power to love him; none of which could otherwiſe be.* When amongſt the innumerable myriads of the heavenly hoaſt, this ſhall be the mutual alternate teſtimony, of each to all the reſt, throughout eternity, will not this be pleaſant? When each ſhall *feel* continually, the freſh illapſes and incomes of God, the power and ſweetneſs of divine influences, the enlivening vigour of that vital breath, and find in themſelves, *Thus we live and are ſuſtained*: and are yet as ſecure, touching the continuance of this ſtate of life, as if every one were a *God to himſelf*; and did each one poſſeſs an entire God-head. When their ſenſible dependence on him, in their glorified ſtate, ſhall be his perpetual triumph over all the imaginary Deities, the phanſied *Numina*, wherewith he was heretofore provoked to jealouſie: and he ſhall now have no rival left, but be acknowledged and known, to be *all in all.* How pleaſant will it, then, be, as it were to loſe themſelves in him! and to be ſwallowed up, in the overcoming ſenſe, of his boundleſs, alſufficient, every where flowing fulneſs!

And

And then add to this; they do by this dependence actually make this fulneſs of God their own. They are now met in one common principle of life and bleſſedneſs, that is ſufficient for them all. They no longer live a life of care, are perpetually exempt from ſolicitous thoughts, which, here, they could not perfectly attain to, in their earthly ſtate. They have nothing to do but to *depend*; to live upon a preſent *ſelf-ſufficient good*, which alone is enough to repleniſh all deſires: elſe it were not ſelf-ſufficient. * How can we divide, in our moſt abſtractive thoughts, the higheſt pleaſure, the fulleſt ſatisfaction from this dependence? 'Tis to live at the rate of a God; a God-like life: A living upon immenſe fulneſs, as he lives.

* Τὸ δὲ αὐταρκὲς τίθεμεν, ὃ μονούμενον αἱρετὸν ποιεῖ τὸν βίον, καὶ μηδενὸς ἐνδεᾷ. *Ariſt. de mor. lib. 1. c. 4.*

2. *Subjection*; which I place next to *dependence*, as being of the ſame allay. The product of impreſt Soveraignty; as the *other*, *of all-ſufficient fulneſs*: Both, impreſſions upon the creature, correſponding to ſomewhat in God, moſt incommunicably appropriate to him.

This is the Souls real, and practical acknowledgment of the Supream Majeſty; Its homage to its Maker; Its ſelf-dedication: Than which nothing more ſutes the *ſtate* of a *creature*, or the *Spirit* of a *Saint*. And as it is ſutable, 'tis pleaſant. 'Tis that, by which the bleſſed Soul becomes, in its own ſenſe, a conſecrated thing, a devoted thing, ſacred to God: its very life, and whole *being* refer'd and made over to him. With what delight-

delightful reliſhes, what ſweet guſts of pleaſure is this done! while the Soul taſts its own act; approves it with a full ungainſaying judgment; apprehends the condignity, and fitneſs of it; aſſents to its ſelf herein; and hath the ready ſuffrage, the harmonious concurrence, of all its powers! When the words are no ſooner ſpoken, *Worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive glory, honour, and power, for thou haſt created all things, and for thy pleaſure they are, and were created*; but they are reſounded from the *penetralia*, the inmoſt bowels, the moſt intimate receptacles, and ſecret chambers of the Soul, *O Lord, thou art worthy:* worthy, that I, and all things ſhould *be to thee*: worthy, to be the *Omega*, as thou art the *Alpha*; the *laſt*, as thou art the *firſt*; the *end*, as thou art the *beginning* of all things; the *Ocean* into which all being ſhall flow, as the *Fountain* from which it ſprang. My whole ſelf, and all my powers, the excellencies now implanted in my being, the priviledges of my now-glorified ſtate, are all worth nothing to me but *for thee*; pleaſe me only, as they make me fitter for thee. O the pleaſure of theſe Sentiments, the joy of ſuch raptures! when the Soul ſhall have no other notion of it ſelf, than of an *everlaſting ſacrifice*, always aſcending to God in its own *flames*.

For, this devotedneſs and ſubjection ſpeak not, barely, an *act*, but a *ſtate*: A *Being to the praiſe of grace*: A *Living to God*. And 'tis no mean pleaſure that the ſincere Soul finds, Rom. 12. 1.

finds, in the imperfect beginnings, the firſt Eſſayes of this life, the initial breathings of ſuch a Spirit, its entrance into this bleſſed ſtate: when it makes the firſt tender, and *preſent* of it ſelf to God (as the Apoſtle expreſſes it); when it firſt begins to eſteem it ſelf an *hallowed thing*; ſeparate, and ſet apart for God: its firſt act of unfeigned ſelf-reſignation; when it tells God from the very heart, *I now give up my ſelf to thee to be thine.* Never was marriage covenant made with ſuch pleaſure, with ſo complacential conſent. This quitting claim to our ſelves, parting with our ſelves upon ſuch terms, to be the Lords for ever: O the peace, the reſt, the acquieſcence of Spirit that attends it! When the poor Soul that was weary of it ſelf, knew not what to do with it ſelf, hath now, on the ſudden, found this way of diſpoſing it ſelf to ſuch an advantage; there is pleaſure in this Treaty. Even the previous breakings and relentings of the Soul towards God are pleaſant. But, O the pleaſure of conſent! of *Teilding our ſelves to God* (as the Apoſtles expreſſion is)! When the Soul is overcome, and cries out, *Lord, now, I reſign, I yeild; Poſſeſs, now, thy own right, I give up my ſelf to thee.* That *yeilding* is ſubjection, ſelf-devoting; in order to future ſervice, and obedience, (*To whom ye yeild your ſelves ſervants to obey*, &c.) And never did any man enroll himſelf, as a ſervant, to the greateſt Prince on earth, with ſuch joy. What pleaſure is there in the often iterated

Rom. 6. 13.

V. 16.

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recognition of theſe tranſactions! in multiplying ſuch bonds upon a mans own Soul (though done faintly, while the fear of breaking, checks its joy in taking them on)! When in the uttering of theſe words, *I am thy ſervant, O Lord, thy ſervant, the ſon of thine hand-maid*, (*i.e.* thy born-ſervant, alluding to that cuſtom and Law among the *Jews*), *Thy ſervant devoted to thy fear*; a man finds they *fit* his ſpirit, and are aptly expreſſive of the true ſenſe of his Soul: is it not a grateful thing? And how pleaſant is a ſtate of life conſequent and agreeable to ſuch tranſactions and Covenants with God! When 'tis meat and drink to do his will! When his zeal eats a man up; and one ſhall find himſelf ſecretly conſuming for God! and the vigour of his Soul exhaled in his ſervice! Is it not a pleaſant thing ſo to ſpend and be ſpent? When one can in a meaſure find that his will is one with Gods, transformed into the divine will; that there is but one common will, and intereſt, and end between him and us; and ſo, that in *ſerving God, we raign with him*; in ſpending our ſelves for him we are perfected in him. Is not this a pleaſant life? Some Heathens have ſpoken at ſuch a rate of this kind of life as might make us wonder, and bluſh. One ſpeaking of a virtuous perſon, ſaith; "He is as a good Souldier that "bears wounds, and numbers ſkars, and at "laſt, ſmitten through with darts, dying, "will love the Emperour, for whom he falls; "he will (ſaith he) keep in mind that anci-

Pſal. 116. 16.

Pſal. 119. 38.

Seneca *de vita beata*, lib. 15. *Et ut bonus miles ferit vulnera, &c.*

"ent

"ent precept, *follow God.* But there are that "complain, cry out and groan, and are com- "pelled by force to do his commands, and "hurried into them againſt their will, and "what a madneſs is it (ſaith he) to be "drawn rather than follow? And preſently after ſubjoins, "We are born in a Kingdom; "to obey God is liberty. The ſame perſon
Epiſt. 96. writes in a Letter to a friend: "If thou be- "lieve me when I moſt freely diſcover to "thee the moſt ſecret fixed temper of my "Soul, in all things my mind is thus form- "ed: I obey not God ſo properly as I aſſent "to him. I follow him, with all my heart, "not, becauſe I cannot avoid it. And ano-
Epictet. Enchir. ther, "Lead me to whatſoever I am appoint- "ed, and I will follow thee chearfully; but "if I refuſe, or be unwilling, I ſhall follow "notwithſtanding.

A Soul caſt into ſuch a mould, formed into an obediential ſubject frame, what ſweet peace doth it enjoy! how pleaſant reſt! Every thing reſts moſt compoſedly in its proper place: A bone out of joint knows no eaſe, nor lets the body enjoy any. The creature is not in its place but when 'tis thus *ſubject*, is in this ſubordination to God. By flying out of this ſubordination, the world of mankind is become one great diſ-jointed body; full of weary toſſings, unacquainted with eaſe, or reſt. That Soul that is, but in a degree, reduc't to that bleſſed State and temper, is, as it were, in a new world; ſo great, and happy a change doth it now

feel

feel in its ſelf. But when this transformation ſhall be compleated in it; and the will of God ſhall be no ſooner known than reſted in with a complacential approbation; and every motion of the firſt and great mover ſhall be an *efficacious law* to guide and determine all our motions; and the leſſer wheels ſhall preſently run at the firſt impulſe of the great and maſter-wheel, without the leaſt rub or heſitation; when the law of ſin ſhall no longer check the law of God; when all the *contentions* of a *rebellious* fleſh; all the counter-ſtrivings of a perverſe, ungovernable heart, ſhall ceaſe for ever; O unconceivable bleſſedneſs of this conſent, the pleaſure of this joyful harmony, this peaceful accord!

Obedience, where 'tis due but from one creature to another, carries its no ſmall advantages with it, and conduciblenes to a pleaſant, unſolicitous life. To be particularly preſcribed to, in things about which our minds would otherwiſe be toſt with various apprehenſions, anxious, uncertain thoughts; how great a priviledg is it! I cannot forget a pertinent paſſage of an excellent perſon of recent memory. "And (ſaith he) for pleaſure I ſhall profeſs my ſelf ſo far from doting on that popular Idol, *Liberty*, that I hardly think it poſſible for any kind of obedience to be more painful than an unreſtrained liberty. Were there not true bounds of Magiſtrates, of Laws, of Piety, of Reaſon in the heart, every man would have" Dr. *Hammond's* Sermon of Chriſtian yoke.

"have a Fool, I add, a mad Tyrant to his "Maſter, that would multiply him more ſor-"rows, than briars and thorns did to *Adam*, "when he was freed from the *bliſs*, at once, "and the *reſtraint* of Paradiſe; and was ſure, "greater ſlave in the wilderneſs, than in the "incloſure. Would but the Scripture per-"mit me that kind of Idolatry, the binding "my faith and obedience to any one viſible "infallible Judg or Prince, were it the *Pope*, "or the *Muſti*, or the *grand Tartar*; might "it be reconcileable with my *Creed*, it would "be certainly with my *intereſt*, to get pre-"ſently into that poſture of obedience. I "ſhould learn ſo much of the *Barbarian* Am-"baſſadors in *Appian*, which came on pur-"poſe to the *Romans* to negotiate for leave "to be their ſervants. 'Twould be my *po-"licy*, if not my *piety*; and may now be my "*wiſh*, though not my *faith*, that I might "never have the trouble to *deliberate*, to "*diſpute*, to *doubt*, to *chuſe*, (thoſe ſo ma-"ny profitleſs uneaſineſſes) but only the fa-"vour to receive commands, and the meek-"neſs to obey them. How pleaſurable then muſt obedience be to the perfect will of the bleſſed God, when our wills ſhall alſo be perfectly attempered and conformed there-unto! Therefore are we taught, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. What is moſt perfect in its kind gives rule to the reſt.

Perfectiſſimum in ſuo genere eſt menſura reliquorum.

3. *Love.* This is an eminent part of the image or likeneſs of God in his Saints: As it

It is that great Attribute of the divine being that is, *alone*, put to give us a notion of God; *God is love.* This is an excellency (conſider it whether in its original, or copy) made up of pleaſantneſſes. All love hath complacency or pleaſure in the *nature*, and moſt *formal notion* of it. To ſearch for pleaſure in love, is the ſame thing as if a man ſhould be ſolicitous to find water in the Sea, or light in the body of the Sun. *Love to a friend* is not without high pleaſure, when eſpecially he is actually preſent, and injoy'd: *Love to a Saint* riſes higher in nobleneſs, and pleaſure, according to the more excellent qualification of its object. 'Tis, now, in its higheſt improvement, in both theſe aſpects of it; where whatſoever tends to gratifie our nature, whether as *humane*, or *holy*, will be in its full perfection. Now, doth the Soul take up its ſtated dwelling in Love, even in God who is Love; and as he is Love: 'tis now encloſed with Love, encompaſs'd with Love, 'tis converſant in the proper region, and element of Love. The Love of God is now perfected in it. That Love which is not only participated from him but terminated in him, that *perfect* Love caſts out tormenting Fear: So that here is pleaſure without mixture. How naturally will the bleſſed Soul now diſſolve and melt into pleaſure! It is new fram'd on purpoſe for Love-embraces, and enjoyments. It ſhall now love like God, as one compoſed of Love. It ſhall no longer be its com-

1 Joh. 4. 8, 16.

1 Joh. 4.

plaint and burden that it cannot retaliate in this kind; that being beloved it cannot love.

4. *Purity.* Herein alſo muſt the bleſſed Soul reſemble God, and delight it ſelf. Every one that hath this hope (viz. *of being hereafter like God, and ſeeing him as he is*) purifieth himſelf as he is pure. A God-like purity is intimately connext with the *expectation* of future bleſſedneſs, much more with the *fruition. Bleſſed are the pure in heart*; beſides the reaſon there annext [for they ſhall ſee God] (which is to be conſidered under the other head, the pleaſure unto which this likeneſs diſpoſes) that propoſition carries its own reaſon in it ſelf. It is an incomparable pleaſure that *purity* carries in its *own nature*: As ſin hath in its very nature (beſides its conſequent guilt and ſorrow) trouble and torment beyond expreſſion. Whatſoever defiles doth alſo diſturb: Nor do any but pure pleaſures deſerve the name. An *Epicurus* himſelf will tell us, there cannot be *pleaſure* without *wiſdom*, *honeſty*, and *righteouſneſs*. 'Tis leaſt of all poſſible there ſhould, when once a perſon ſhall have a right knowledg of himſelf, and (which is the moral impurity whereof we ſpeak) the filthineſs of ſin. I doubt not but much of the torment of Hell, will conſiſt, in thoſe

Whoſe Doctrine, as to this matter of pleaſure, is not ſo much to be blamed as his practiſe, if both be rightly repreſented to us.

Οὐκ ἔστιν ἡδέως ζῆν ἄνευ τοῦ φρονίμως καὶ δικαίως. Ex Cicer. 1. de Fin.

too-late

too-late, and deſpairing ſelf-loathings, thoſe ſickly reſentments, the impure wretches will be poſſeſſed with, when they ſee what hideous deformed monſters their own wickedneſs hath made them. Here the gratifications of ſenſe that attend it, bribe and ſeduce their judgments into another eſtimate of ſin: but *then*, it ſhall be no longer thought of under the more favourable notion of a γλυκύπικρον; they ſhall taſte nothing but the gall and wormwood.

'Tis certainly no improbable thing, but that reaſon being, now, ſo fully rectified and undeceived, vizors torn off, and things now appearing in their own likeneſs; ſo much will be ſeen, and apprehended of the intrinſique evil and malignity of their vitiated natures, as will ſerve for the matter of further torment; while yet ſuch a ſight can do no more to a change of their temper, than the Devils faith doth to theirs: Such ſights, being accompanied with their no-hope of ever attaining a better ſtate, do therefore no way tend to mollifie or demulce their Spirits, but to encreaſe their rage and torment.

It is however out of queſtion, that the purity of heaven will infinitely inhance the pleaſure of it: For 'tis more certain, the intrinſical goodneſs of holineſs (which term I need not among theſe inſtances; in as much as the thing admits not of one entire notion, but lies partly under this head, partly under the ſecond, that *of devotedneſs to God*) will

be fully underſtood in Heaven, than the intrinſecal evil of ſin in Hell: And when it is underſtood, will it not affect? will it not pleaſe? Even here, how pleaſing are things, to the pure (but in degree ſo), that partiPſal. 119. 140. cipate of the divine purity! *Thy word is very pure* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *therefore thy ſervant loveth it.* Under this notion do holy ones take pleaſure each in other; becauſe they ſee ſomewhat of the divine likeneſs, their Fathers image, in one another: Will it not be much more pleaſing to find it each one perfect in himſelf? to feel the eaſe, and peace, and reſt, that naturally goes with it? A man that hath any love of cleanlineſs, if caſually plung'd into the mire, he knows not what to do with himſelf, he phanſies his own Job 9. cloaths to abhor him (as *Job* rhetorically ſpeaks); ſo, doth as natural a pleaſure attend purity: it hath it even in it ſelf. *The* Prov. 15. 26. *words of the pure* (ſaith the Wiſe-man) *are pleaſant words*, (words of pleaſantneſſes it might be read): That pure breath that goes from him, is not without a certain pleaſurableneſs accompanying it. And if ſo to another, much more to himſelf, eſpecially when every thing correſponds; and (as the expreſſion is) he finds himſelf *clean throughout.*

5. *Liberty*, (Another part of the Divine likeneſs, wherein we are to imitate God) cannot but be an unſpeakable ſatisfaction. Suppoſing ſuch a ſtate of the notion of liberty as may render it really a perfection: which

which otherwiſe it would be a wickedneſs to impute to God, and an impoſſibility to partake from him.

I here ſpeak of the *moral liberty* of a *Saint*, as ſuch; not of the *natural liberty* of a *man*, as a man: and of the *liberty conſummate* of Saints in glory; not of the *inchoate*, imperfect *liberty* of Saints on earth.

And therefore the intricate controverſies about the liberty of the humane will, lye out of our way, and need not give us any trouble.

'Tis out of queſtion that this Liberty conſiſts not (what ever may be ſaid of any other) in an equal propenſion to good or evil; nor in the wills independency on the practical underſtanding; nor in a various uncertain mutability, or inconſtancy; nor is it ſuch, as is oppoſed to all neceſſity; 'tis not a liberty from the government of God, * nor from a determination to the ſimply beſt, and moſt eligible Objects.

* Which is a no more deſirable ſtate than that which, I remember, the Hiſtorian tells us was the condition of the Armenians; Who having caſt off the government that was over them, became *Inerti, ſolutique, & magis ſine domino quam in libertate.* Tacit. An. l. 2.

But it is a liberty from the ſervitude of ſin, from the ſeduction of a miſguided Judgment; and the allurement of any inſnaring, forbidden Object: conſiſting in an unbounded amplitude and enlargedneſs of Soul towards God, and indetermination to any inferiour

riour good: reſulting * from an entire ſubjection to the divine will, a ſubmiſſion to the order of God, and ſteady adherence to him. And unto which the many deſcriptions and elogies agree moſt indiſputably, which from ſundry Authors are congeſted together by *Gibieuf*, * in that ingenious Tractate of Liberty.

* *Libertas noſtra non eſt ſubjectio ad Deum formaliter, ſed amplitudo conſequens eam.* Gibieuf. *De libert. Dei & creatura. lib.* 1. *c.* 32.

As that, *He is free that lives as he will*, (from *Cicero* inſiſted on by *S. Aug. de Civit. Dei lib.* 14. *c.* 25.) *i.e.* who neither wiſhes any thing, nor fears any thing; who in all things acquieſces in the will of God; who minds nothing but his own things, and accounts nothing his own but God; who favors nothing but God; who is mov'd only by the will of God.

Id. Ibid. Again; *He is free, that cannot be hindred being willing, nor forced being unwilling* (from *Epictetus*) i. e. *who hath always his will*; as having perfectly ſubjected it to the will of God, (as the ſame Author explains himſelf.)

Again; *He is free that is maſter of himſelf* (from the *Civilians*) *i. e.* (as that liberty reſpects the ſpirit of a man) that hath a mind independent on any thing foreign, and alien to himſelf.

That only follows God (from *Philo Judeus*); *That lives according to his own reaſon* (from *Ariſtotle*): With many more of like im-

import; that, alone, do fully and perfectly ſute, that ſtate of liberty the bleſſed Soul ſhall hereafter eternally enjoy; as that Author often acknowledges.

This is *the glorious Liberty of the Children of God; the Liberty wherewith the Son makes free. Liberty indeed*; meaſured, and regulated by the *royal Law of Liberty*, and which is perfected only in a perfect conformity thereto. There is a moſt *ſervile* * *liberty*, a being (*a*) free from righteouſneſs, which, under that ſpecious name and ſhew, (*b*) *enſlaves a man to corruption*: and there is as *free a ſervice*, by which a man is ſtill the more free, by how much the more he ſerves, and is ſubject to his ſuperiours will, and governing influences; and by how much the leſs poſſible it is, he ſhould ſwerve therefrom *.

* *Quam invenere ſibi, adjuvant ſervitutem. Et ſunt, quodammodo, propriâ Libertate captivi.* Boeth. ex Gib. *Nullis quâ valeat trahi catenam.* Sen. Trag. (*a*) Rom. 6. 20. (*b*) 2 Pet. 2.

* *Liberior quâ divina gratia ſubjectior. Primum Liberum arbitrium, quod homini datum eſt, quando primùm creatus eſt rectus, potuit non peccare; ſed potuit & peccare. Hoc autem noviſſimum & potentius erit, quâ peccare non potuit.* Aug. de Civitat. Dei lib. 22. c. 30.

The neareſt approaches therefore of the Soul to God; Its moſt intimate union with him, and entire ſubjection to him, in its glorified ſtate, makes its liberty conſummate. Now is its deliverance compleat, its bands are fallen off, tis perfectly diſentangled from all the ſnares of death, in which it was formerly held; 'tis under no reſtraints, op-

preſt by no weights, held down by no clogs, It hath the free exerciſe of all its powers; hath every faculty and affection at command. How unconceivable a pleaſure is this! With what delight doth the poor priſoner entertain himſelf, when his manacles and fetters are knockt off! when he's enlarged from his loathſom dungeon, and the houſe of his bondage; breathes in a free air; can diſpoſe of himſelf, and walk at liberty whither he will! The bird eſcaped from his Cage, or freed from his Line and Stone, that reſiſted its vain and too feeble ſtruglings before, how pleaſantly doth it range! with what joy doth it clap its wings, and take its flight! A faint Emblem of the joy, wherewith that pleaſant chearful note ſhall, one day, be ſung and chanted forth, *Our ſoul is eſcaped, as a bird out of the ſnare of the Fowler; the ſnare is broken, and we are eſcaped.* There is now no place for ſuch a complaint, *I would, but I cannot*; I would turn my thoughts to glorious objects, but I cannot. The bleſſed Soul feels it ſelf *free* from all confinement: nothing reſiſts its will, as its will doth never reſiſt the will of God. It knows no limits, no reſtraints, is not tied up to this or that particular good; but expatiates freely, in the immenſe univerſal all-comprehending goodneſs of God himſelf.

And this liberty, is the perfect Image and likeneſs of the liberty of God, eſpecially in its conſummate ſtate. In its progreſs

greſs towards it, it increaſes as the Soul draws nearer to God: which nearer approach is not in reſpect of place, or local nearneſs, but likeneſs, and conformity to him; in reſpect whereof, as God is moſt ſublime and excellent in himſelf, ſo is it in him.

Libertas noſtra inhæret divinæ, ut exemplari, & in perpetua ejus imitatione verſatur, ſive ortum, ſive progreſſum, ſive conſummationem ejus intuearis: Libertas noſtra, in ortu, eſt capacitas Dei. In progreſſu, libertas res eſt longè clarior: progreſſus enim attenditur penes acceſſum hominis ad Deum; qui quidem non locali propinquitate, ſed imitatione & aſſimilatione conſtat, & eâ utique imitatione, & aſſimilatione, ſecundùm quam, ſicut Deus eſt ſublimis, & excelſus ſeipſo; ita homo eſt ſublimis, & excelſus Deo, & altitudo ejus Deus eſt, ut inquit D. Auguſtinus. *Conſummatio denique libertatis eſt, cum homo in Deum, feliciſſimo gloriæ cæleſtis ſtatu, tranformatur; & Deus* omnia *illi eſſe incipit. Qui quidem poſtremus ſtatus, eo differt à priore—quippe homo tum non modo inalligatus eſt creaturis, ſed nec circa illas negotiatur, etiam referendo in finem—nec in creaturis ſe infundit, nec per illas procedit, ut faciebat cum eſſet viator: ſed in ſolo Deo, & conquieſcit & effundit ſe placidiſſimè, & motus ejus, cum ſit ad preſentiſſimum & conjunctiſſimum bonum, ſimilior eſt quieti quàm motui,* Gib. l. 2. c. 14.

Its conſummate liberty is; when it is ſo fully tranformed into the likeneſs of God, as that he is *all* to it, as to himſelf. So that as he is an infinite *ſatisfaction* to himſelf; his likeneſs in this reſpect, is the very *ſatisfaction* it ſelf, of the bleſſed Soul.

6. *Tranquillity.* This alſo is an eminent part of that aſſimilation to God, wherein the bleſſedneſs of the holy Soul muſt be underſtood to lye: a perfect compoſure, a perpetual and everlaſting calm, an eternal vacan-

vacancy from all unquietness or perturbation. Nothing can be supposed more inseparably agreeing to the nature of God than this: Whom Scripture witnesses to be *without variableness or shadow of change.* There can be no commotion without mutation, nor can the least mutation have place, in a perfectly simple and uncompounded nature: Whence even *Pagan* reason hath been wont to attribute the most undisturbed and unalterable tranquillity to the nature of God. *Balaam* knew it was incompatible to him to *lye*, or *repent*. And (supposing *him* to speak this from a present inspiration) it is their common Doctrine concerning God. *Any the least troubles and tempests* (saith one) *are far exiled from the tranquillity of God; for all the inhabitants of heaven do ever enjoy* the same stable *tenour, even an eternal equality of mind.* And a little after, speaking of God, saith he, *'Tis neither possible he should be moved by the force of another, for nothing is stronger than God: nor of his own accord, for nothing is perfecter than God.*

Omnes turbulæ tempestates quæ procul à Deorum cœlestium tranquillitate exulant, &c. Apuleius de Deo Socratis.

And whereas there is somewhat that is mutable, and subject to change; somewhat that is stable and fixt: *In which of those natures* (saith another) *shall we place God? must we not in that which is more stable and fixt, and free from this fluidness and mutability? For what is there among all beings, that can be stable or consist, if God do not, by his own touch, stay and sustain the nature of it?*

—Ἐν ποτέρᾳ τῶν φύσεων τούτων τὸν θεὸν τακτέον; ἄρα οὐκ ἐν στασιμωτέρᾳ καὶ ἑδραιοτέρᾳ, καὶ ἀπηλλαγμένῃ τοῦ ῥεύματος τούτου, &c. Max. Tyr. *disser.* 1.

Hence

Hence is it made a piece of *deiformity*, of likeneſs to God, by another, who tells his friend, *It is an high and great thing which thou deſireſt, and even bordering upon a Deity; not to be moved.*

Quod deſideras autem, magnum, ſummum, pæ, Deique vicinum; non conturi. Sen. de tranquil. Animi.

Yea, ſo hath this Doctrine been inſiſted on by them, that, (while other Divine perfections have been leſs underſtood,) it hath occaſioned *the Stoical aſſertion of fatality* to be introduced on the one hand, and *the Epicurean negation of providence* on the other; leſt any thing ſhould be admitted that might ſeem repugnant to the tranquillity of their *Numina*.

But, we know, that our God doth whatſoever pleaſeth him, both in heaven and earth; and that he doth all according to the wiſe counſel of his holy will; *freely*, not *fatally*, upon the eternal previſion, and foreſight of all circumſtances and events: ſo that nothing can occur that is new to him, nothing that he knows not how to improve to good; or that can, therefore, infer any alteration of his counſels, or occaſion to him the leaſt perturbation or diſquiet, in reference to them.

Holy Souls *begin*, herein, to imitate him, as ſoon as they firſt give themſelves up to his wiſe and gracious conduct. 'Tis enough that he is wiſe for himſelf and them. Their hearts ſafely truſt in him. They commit

mit themſelves, with unſolicitous confidence, to his guidance; knowing he *cannot* himſelf be miſ-led, and that he will not miſ-lead them. As *Abraham* followed him, not knowing whither he went. And thus, by *faith*, they enter into his reſt.

They do, now, in their preſent ſtate, only *enter* into it, or hover about the borders: Their, future, aſſimilation to God in this, gives them a ſtated ſettlement of Spirit in this reſt. They *before* did owe their tranquillity to their *faith*; *now* to their actual *fruition*. Their *former* acquieſcency, and ſedate temper was hence, that they believed God *would* deal well with them at laſt; their *preſent*, for that he *hath* done ſo. Thoſe words have, now, their fulleſt ſenſe (both as to the reſt it ſelf, which they mention; and the *ſeaſon* of it) *Return to thy reſt, O my ſoul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.* The *occaſions of trouble*, and a *paſſive temper of Spirit*, are ceaſed together. There is, now, no fear without, nor terror within. The rage of the world is, now, allay'd, it ſtorms no longer. Reproach and perſecution have found a period. There is no more dragging before Tribunals, nor haling into Priſons; no more running into dens, and deſerts; or wandring to and fro in Sheep-skins, and Goat-skins. And, with the ceſſation of the external occaſions of trouble, the inward diſpoſitions thereto are alſo ceaſed. All infirmities of Spirit, tumultuating paſſions, unmortified corruptions, doubts, or, imperfect knowledg of the

Pſal. 116.

love

love of God, are altogether vaniſhed, and done away for ever.

And indeed, that perfect cure wrought within, is the Souls great ſecurity from all future diſquiet. A well tempered Spirit hath been wont ſtrangely, to preſerve its own peace in this unquiet world. *Philoſophy* hath *boaſted* much in this kind; and *Chriſtianity* performed more.

The Philoſophical (γαλήνη, or) calmneſs of mind, is not without its excellency and praiſe: "That ſtable ſettlement and fix- Sen. *de* "edneſs of Spirit, that εὐθυμία (as the mo- *tranquil.* "raliſt tells us, it was wont to be termed *anim.* "among the *Grecians*, and which he calls "Tranquillity); when the mind is always "equal, and goes a ſmooth even courſe, is "propitious to it ſelf, and beholds the things "that concern it with pleaſure, and inter- "rupts not this joy, but remains in a pla- "cid ſtate, never at any time exalting or de- "preſſing it ſelf. But how far doth the *Chriſtian peace* ſurpaſs it! *That peace which paſſeth* Phil. 4. 7. *all underſtanding*; that, amidſt ſurrounding dangers, enables the holy Soul to ſay (without a proud boaſt) *None of all theſe things* Act. 20. *move me.* The peace, that immediately re- 24. ſults from that faith, which unites the Soul with God, and fixes it upon him as its firm *baſis.* When 'tis *kept in perfect peace, by being* Iſa. 26. 3. *ſtay'd upon him, becauſe it truſts in him. When* Pſal. 112. *the heart is fixed, truſting in the Lord; filled* 7. *full of joy, and peace, or of joyous peace,* (by Rom. 15. an ἐν τῷ πιστεύειν) *in believing.* 13.

And

And if Philoſophy and (which far tranſcends it) Chriſtianity, Reaſon and Faith, have that ſtatique power, can ſo compoſe the Soul, and reduce it to ſo quiet a conſiſtency, in the midſt of ſtorms and tempeſts: how perfect and contentful a repoſe, will the immediate viſion, and enjoyment of God afford it, in that ſerene and peaceful Region, where it ſhall dwell for ever, free from any moleſtation from without, or principle of diſreſt within!

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

The Pleaſure ariſing from knowing, *or conſidering* our ſelves to be like God: *from conſidering it,* 1. Abſolutely, 2. Comparatively, *or reſpectively; To the former ſtate of the Soul, To the ſtate of loſt Souls, To its pattern, To the way of accompliſhment, To the Souls own expectations, To what it ſecures. The Pleaſure whereto* it diſpoſes, *of union, communion. A compariſon of this Righteouſneſs, with this Bleſſedneſs.*

2. HEre is alſo to be conſidered, *the pleaſure and ſatisfaction involv'd in this aſſimilation to God, as it is known or reflected on, or that ariſes from the* cognoſci *of this likeneſs.*

We have, hitherto, diſcourſed of the pleaſure of *being like God,* as that is apprehended, *by a ſpiritual ſenſation,* a feeling of that inward rectitude, that happy pleaſure of Souls, now, perfectly reſtored: We have yet to conſider a further pleaſure, which acrews from the Souls animadverſion upon it ſelf, its contemplating its ſelf thus happily transformed.

formed. And though, that very ſenſation be not without ſome animadverſion (as indeed no ſenſible perception can be performed without it), yet we muſt conceive a conſequent animadverſion, which is much more explicite, and diſtinct; and which therefore yeilds a very great addition of Satisfaction and delight. As, when the bleſſed Soul ſhall turn its eye upon it ſelf, and deſignedly compoſe and ſet it ſelf, to conſider its preſent ſtate and frame; the conſideration it ſhall, now, have of it ſelf, and this likeneſs impreſt upon it, may be either

{ Abſolute, or
{ Comparative and reſpective.

1. Abſolute. How pleaſing a ſpectacle will this be, When the glorified Soul ſhall now intentively behold its own glorious frame? When it ſhall dwell in the contemplation of it ſelf? View it ſelf round on every part, turn its eye from glory to glory, from beauty to beauty, from one excellency to another; and trace over the whole draught of this image, this ſo exquiſite piece of divine workmanſhip, drawn out, in its full perfection, upon its ſelf? When the glorified eye, and divinely enlightned and inſpirited mind, ſhall apply it ſelf to criticize, and make a judgment upon every ſeveral lineament, every touch and ſtroke; ſhall ſtay it ſelf, and ſcrupulouſly inſiſt upon every part? View at leiſure every character of glory the bleſſed God

God hath inſtamp't upon it; How will this likeneſs, now, ſatisfie! And that expreſſion of the bleſſed Apoſtle (taken notice of upon ſome other occaſion formerly) [The glory to be *revealed* in us], ſeems to import in it a reference to ſuch a ſelf-intuition: What ſerves *revelation* for, but in order to *viſion*? What is it, but an *expoſing things to view*? And, what is revealed *in us*, is chiefly expoſed to *our own view*.

All the time, from the Souls firſt converſion till now, God hath been as it were at work upon it, (*—He that wrought us to*, &c.) [a] hath been labouring it, ſhaping it, poliſhing it, ſpreading his own glory upon it, inlaying, inameling it with glory: now, at laſt, the whole work is revealed, the Curtain is drawn aſide, the bleſſed Soul awakes. Come now, ſaith God, *behold my work*, ſee what I have done upon thee, let my work now ſee the light; I dare expoſe it to the *cenſure* of the moſt curious eye, let thine own have the *pleaſure* of beholding it. It was a work carried on in a Myſtery, ſecretly wrought (as in the lower parts of the earth, as we alluded before) by a Spirit that came and went, no man could tell how. Beſides, that in the general only, we knew *we ſhould be like him*, it did not yet appear what we ſhould be; *now it appears*: there is a revelation of this glory. O the raviſhing pleaſure of its firſt appearance! and it will be a glory always freſh and flouriſhing (as *Job*'s expreſſion is, *My glory was freſh in me*) and

[a] 2 Cor. 5. 5.

will afford a freſh, undecaying pleaſure for ever.

2. The bleſſed Soul may alſo be ſuppoſed to have a comparative and reſpective conſideration of this impreſſed glory. That is, ſo as to compare it with, and refer it to ſeveral things that may come into conſideration with it: and may ſo heighten its own delight in the contemplation thereof.

1. *If we conſider this impreſſion of glory, in reference to its former loathſom deformities* that were upon it, and which are now vaniſhed and gone: how unconceivable a pleaſure will ariſe from this compariſon? When the Soul ſhall conſider, at once, *what it is*, and *what* once *it was*, and thus bethink it ſelf: I, that did ſometimes bear the accurſed image of the *Prince of darkneſs*, do now repreſent and partake of the holy, pure nature of the *Father of lights*. I was a meer Chaos, an hideous heap of Deformity, Confuſion and
2 Cor. 4. 6. Darkneſs. *But he that made light to ſhine out of darkneſs, ſhined into me, to give the knowledg of the light of his own glory in the face of Jeſus*
Prov. 4. 18. *Chriſt*; and ſince, made my way *as the ſhining light, ſhining brighter and brighter unto this perfect day.* I was an habitation of Dragons, a Cage of noiſom luſts; that, as Serpents and Vipers, were winding to and fro through all my faculties and powers, and preying upon my very vitals. Then was I hateful to God, and an hater of him; ſin, and vanity had all my heart. The charming

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invitations, and allurements of grace, were as muſick to a dead man; to think a ſerious thought of God, or breath forth an affectionate deſire after him, was as much againſt my heart, as to pluck out mine own eyes, or offer violence to mine own life.

After I began to live the Spiritual new life; how ſlow, and faint was my progreſs and tendency towards perfection? how indiſpoſed did I find my ſelf to the proper actions of that life? To go about any holy ſpiritual work, was, too often, as to climb an Hill, or ſtrive againſt the ſtream; or as an attempt to fly without wings. I have ſometime ſaid to my heart; *Come, now, let's go pray, love God, think of heaven*; but O how liſtleſs to theſe things! how lifeleſs in them! Impreſſions made, how quickly loſt! gracious frames, how ſoon wrought off and gone! characters of glory raz'd out, and overſpread with earth and dirt! Divine comelineſs hath now at length made me perfect. *The glory of God* doth now incloath me; they are his ornaments I now wear. He hath made, me, that lately, *lay among the pots; as the wings of a dove covered with ſilver, and her feathers with yellow gold*; He hath put another nature into me, the true likeneſs of his own holy divine nature; He hath now perfectly maſter'd and wrought out the enmity of my heart againſt him. Now, to be with God is my very element. Loving, admiring, praiſing him are as natural, as breathing once was. I am all Spirit and life. I feel my ſelf diſburthened,

and unclogg'd of all the heavy oppreſſive weights that hung upon me. No *body of death* doth now incumber me, no deadneſs of heart, no coldneſs of love, no drowſie ſloth, no averſneſs from God, no earthly mind, no ſenſual inclinations or affections, no ſinful diviſions of heart between God and Creatures. He hath now the whole of me. I enjoy and delight in none but him: O bleſſed change! O happy day!

2. *If in contemplating it ſelf, cloathed with this likeneſs, it reſpect the ſtate of damned Souls*, what tranſports muſt that occaſion! what raviſhing reſentments! When it compares humane nature in its higheſt perfection, with the ſame nature in its utmoſt depravation? An unſpeakably more unequal compariſon than that would be, of the moſt amiable lovely perſon, flouriſhing in the prime of youthful ſtrength and beauty, with a putrified rotten carcaſs, deformed by the corruption of a loathſom grave. When glorified Spirits ſhall make ſuch a reflection as this: Lo, here we ſhine in the glorious brightneſs of the divine Image; and behold yonder deformed accurſed Souls: They were as capable of this glory as we, had the ſame nature with us, the ſame reaſon, the ſame intellectual faculties and powers; but what monſters are they now become? They eternally hate the eternal excellency. Sin and death are finiſhed upon them. They have each of them an hell of horror and wickedneſs in it ſelf. Whence is this amazing difference! Though this

this cannot but be an awful wonder, it cannot alſo, but be temper'd with pleaſure and joy.

3. *We may ſuppoſe this likeneſs to be conſidered in reference to its patern*, and in compariſon therewith; which will then be another way of heightning the pleaſure that ſhall ariſe thence. Such a frame and conſtitution of Spirit is full of delights in it ſelf: but when it ſhall be refer'd to its *original*, and the correſpondency between the one, and the other be obſerv'd and view'd; how exactly they accord, and anſwer each other as face doth face in the water; this cannot, ſtill, but add pleaſure to pleaſure, one delight to another. When the bleſſed Soul ſhall, interchangeably, turn its eye to God, and it ſelf; and conſider the agreement of *glory*, to *glory*; the ſeveral *derived* excellencies to the *original*. He is wiſe, and ſo am I; holy, and ſo am I. I am now made perfect as my heavenly Father is; this gives a new reliſh to the former pleaſure. How will this likeneſs pleaſe under that notion, *as it is his*; a likeneſs to *him*! O the accent that will be put upon thoſe appropriative words to be made partakers of [His] holineſs, and of the [Divine] nature! Perſonal excellencies, in themſelves conſidered, cannot be reflected on but with ſome pleaſure; but to the ingenuity of a child, how, eſpecially, grateful will it be, to obſerve in it ſelf, ſuch and ſuch graceful deportments, wherein it naturally imitates its father! So he was wont to ſpeak, and act, and

demean himſelf. How natural is it *unto love* to affect, and aim at the imitation of the perſon loved! So natural it muſt be, to take complacency therein; when we have hit our mark, and atchiev'd our deſign. The purſuits and attainments of love are proportionable and correſpondent each to other.

And what heart can compaſs the greatneſs of this thought, *to be made like God*! Lord, was there no lower patern than thy ſelf, thy glorious bleſſed ſelf, according to which to form a worm! This cannot want its due reſentments in a glorified ſtate.

4. *This transformation of the bleſſed Soul into the likeneſs of God, may be viewed by it, in reference to the way of accompliſhment*; as an *end*, brought about by ſo amazing ſtupendous means: which will certainly be a pleaſing contemplation. When it reflects on the method and courſe inſiſted on, for bringing this matter to paſs; Views over the work of redemption, in its tendency to this end,

Phil. 2. 7. *The reſtoring Gods Image in Souls*; Conſiders, Chriſt manifeſted *to us*, in order to his being revealed and formed *in us*: That God was made in the likeneſs of man, to make men after the likeneſs of God; that he partook with us of the *humane nature*, that we might with him partake of the *divine*; that he aſſumed our fleſh, in order to impart to us his Spirit. When it ſhall be conſidered, for this end had

2 Pet. 1. 4. we ſo *many great and precious promiſes*; for
2 Cor. 3. 18. this end did the glory of the *Lord ſhine upon us through the glaſs of the Goſpel*; *that we might be*

be made partakers, &c. *that we might be changed*, &c. Yea, when it ſhall be called to mind, (though it be far from following hence, that this is the only or principal way, wherein the life and death of Chriſt have influence, in order to our eternal happineſs) that our Lord Jeſus lived for this end, that we might learn, ſo *to walk, as he alſo walked*; that he died that we *might be conformed to his death*; *that he roſe again*, that we might with him *attain the reſurrection of the dead*; that he was in us the *hope of glory*, that he might *be in us* (that is, that ſame Image that bears his Name) our final conſummate glory it ſelf alſo. With what pleaſure will theſe harmonious congruities, theſe apt correſpondencies, be look'd into at laſt!

Now may the glorified Saint ſay, I here ſee the end the Lord Jeſus came into the world for. I ſee for what he was *lift up*, made a ſpectacle; that he might be *a transforming one*. What the effuſions of his Spirit were for; why it ſo earneſtly ſtrove with my way-ward heart. I now behold in my own Soul, the fruit of the travel of his Soul. This was the project of redeeming love, the deſign of all-powerful Goſpel-grace. Glorious atchievement! bleſſed end of that great, and notable undertaking! happy iſſue of that high deſign!

5. *With reference to all their own expectations and endeavours.* When it ſhall be conſidered by a Saint in glory; The attainment of this perfect likeneſs to God, was the utmoſt mark of all my deſigns, and aims; the term

of all my hopes and deſires. This is that I long'd and laboured for; that which I pray'd and waited for; which I ſo earneſtly breath'd after, and reſtleſſly purſu'd. It was but *to recover the defaced image of God: To be again made like him, as once I was.* Now I have attained my end; I have the fruit of all my labour and travels; I ſee now the truth of thoſe (often) encouraging words, *Bleſſed are they that hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs, for they ſhall be filled. Be not weary of well-doing, for ye ſhall reap, if ye faint not.* What would I once have given for a ſteady abiding frame of holineſs, for an heart conſtantly bent and biaſſed toward God; conſtantly ſerious, conſtantly tender, lively, watchful, heavenly, ſpiritual, meek, humble, chearful, ſelf-denying? How have I cryed and ſtriven for this, to get ſuch an heart! ſuch a temper of ſpirit! how have I pleaded with God, and my own Soul, in order hereto! How often over have I ſpread this deſire before the Searcher and Judge of hearts; *Turn me out of all my worldly comforts, ſo then give me but ſuch an heart; Let me ſpend my days in a Priſon, or a Deſart, ſo I have but ſuch a heart; I refuſe no reproaches, no loſſes, no tortures, may I but have ſuch a heart?* How hath my Soul been ſometimes raviſht with the very thought of ſuch a temper of Spirit, as, hath appeared amiable in my eye, but I could not attain? and what a torture again hath it been, that I could not? What grievance in all the world, in all the days of my vanity, did I ever find comparable

parable to this; *To be able to frame to my ſelf by Scripture, and rational light and rules, the Notion and Idea of an excellent temper of ſpirit; and then to behold it, to have it in view, and not be able to reach it, to poſſeſs my Soul of it?* What indignation have I ſometimes conceived againſt mine own Soul, when I have found it wandring and could not reduce it; hovering, and could not fix it; dead, and could not quicken it; low, and could not raiſe it? How earneſtly have I expected this bleſſed day, when all thoſe diſtempers ſhould be perfectly healed, and my Soul recover an healthy, lively, ſpiritual frame? What freſh ebullitions of joy will, here, be, when all former deſires, hopes, endeavours, are crowned with ſucceſs and fruit! This joy is the joy of Harveſt. *They that have ſown in tears, do now reap in joy. They that went out weeping, bearing precious ſeed; now, with rejoicing, bring their ſheaves with them.* Pſal. 126. 6.

6. *In reference to what this impreſt likeneſs ſhall for ever ſecure to it: an everlaſting amity and friendſhip with God; that it ſhall never ſin, nor be ever frown more.*

1. That it ſhall ſin no more. The perfected image of God in it, is its ſecurity for this: for 'tis holy throughout; in every point conformed to his nature and will; there remains in it nothing contrary to him. It may therefore certainly conclude it ſhall never be liable to the danger of doing any thing but what is good in his ſight: and what ſolace will the bleſſed Soul find in this! If *now* an Angel from

from Heaven ſhould aſſure it, that from ſuch an hour it ſhould ſin no more, the world would not be big enough to hold ſuch a Soul. It hath now eſcaped the deadlieſt of dangers, the worſt of deaths (and which even in its preſent ſtate, upon more deliberate calmer thoughts it accounts ſo) the ſting of death, the very deadlineſs of death; the Hell of Hell it ſelf. The deliverance is now compleat which cannot but end in delight and praiſe.

2. That God can never frown more. This 'tis hence alſo aſſured of: How can he but take perfect everlaſting complacency in his own perfect likeneſs and image; and behold with pleaſure, his glorious workmanſhip, now never liable to impairment, or decay? How pleaſant a thought is this, The bleſſed God never beholds me but with delight! I ſhall always behold his ſerene countenance, his amiable face, never covered with any clouds, never darkned with any frown! "I "ſhall now have cauſe to complain no more, "My God is a ſtranger to me, he conceals "himſelf, I cannot ſee his face, lo he is in- "compaſt with Clouds and darkneſs, or, "with flames and terrors. Theſe occaſions are for ever ceaſed. God ſees no cauſe, either to *behold* the bleſſed Soul with diſpleaſure, or with diſpleaſure to *avert* from it, and turn off his eye. And will not this eternally ſatisfie! When God himſelf is ſo well pleaſed, ſhall not we!

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2. The pleaſure it diſpoſes to. Beſides that *the inbeing, and knowledg of this likeneſs*, are ſo ſatisfying; It diſpoſes, and is the ſouls qualification, for a yet further pleaſure: That *of cloſeſt union, and moſt inward communion with the bleſſed God.*

1. *Union*: Which (what it is more than relation) is not, till now, compleat. Beſides *relation* it muſt needs import *preſence*: not *Phyſical*, or *Local*; for ſo nothing can be nearer God than it is: but *moral*, and *cordial*, by which the holy Soul with *will* and *affections*, guided by rectified reaſon, and judgment, cloſes with, and embraces him; and he alſo upon wiſe forelaid counſel, and with infinite delight, and love embraceth it: So friends are ſaid to be one (beſides their relation as friends) by an union of hearts. An union between God and the creature, as to kind and nature higher than this, and lower than Hypoſtatical or perſonal union I underſtand not, and therefore ſay nothing of it *.

* I would fain know what the *Terminus* ſhall be, reſulting from the Phyſical union ſome ſpeak of.

But as to the union here mentioned: as, till the image of God be perfected, it is not compleated; ſo it cannot but be perfect then. When the Soul is perfectly formed according to Gods own heart, and fully participates the divine likeneſs, is perfectly like him; that likeneſs cannot but infer the moſt intimate

intimate union that two ſuch natures can admit: that is, (for nature) a *love-union*; ſuch as that, which our Saviour mentions, and prays to the Father to perfect, between themſelves and all believers, and among believers, mutually, with one another. Many much trouble themſelves about this Scripture; but ſure that can be no other than a *love-union*. For, (1) 'Tis ſuch an union as Chriſtians are capable of among themſelves; (for ſurely he would never pray that they might be one with an union whereof they are not capable). (2) 'Tis ſuch an union as may be made viſible to the world. Whence 'tis an obvious corollary, *that the union between the Father and the Son, there ſpoken of as the patern of this, is not their union or oneneſs in eſſence*, (though it be a moſt acknowledged thing, that there is ſuch an eſſential union between them); for, who can conceive that Saints ſhould be one among themſelves, and with the Father and the Son, with ſuch an union as the Father and the Son are one themſelves, if the eſſential union between Father and Son were the union here ſpoken of? But the *exemplary* or *patern-union*, here mentioned, between Father and Son, is but an union in mind, in love, in deſign, and intereſt; whereln he prays, that Saints on earth might *viſibly* be one with them alſo, *that the world might believe*, &c.

Joh. 17. 21. ver. 11. Ver. 21.

'Tis yet a rich pleaſure that ſprings up to glorified Saints from that *love-union* (now perfected) between the bleſſed God and them,

them. 'Tis mentioned and ſhadowed in Scripture, under the name and notion of marriage-union; in which the greateſt mutual complacency is always ſuppoſed a neceſſary ingredient. To be thus joined to the Lord, and made, as it were, one Spirit with him; For the eternal God to cleave in love to a *nothing-creature*, as his likeneſs upon it engages him to do; is this no pleaſure, or a mean one? 1 Cor. 6. 16.

2. *Communion*: unto which that union is fundamental, and introductive; and which follows it upon the ſame ground, from a natural propenſity *of like to like*. There is nothing now to hinder God and the holy Soul, of the moſt inward fruitions and enjoyments; no animoſity, no ſtrangeneſs, no unſuitableneſs on either part. Here the glorified Spirits of the juſt have liberty to ſolace themſelves, amidſt the rivers of pleaſure at Gods own right hand, without check or reſtraint. They are pure, and theſe pure. They touch nothing that can defile, they defile nothing they can touch. They are not now forbidden the neareſt approaches to the (*once*) inacceſſible Majeſty; there's no Holy of Holies into which they may not enter, no dore lockt up againſt them. They may have free admiſſion into the innermoſt ſecret of the divine preſence, and pour forth themſelves in the moſt liberal effuſions of *love* and *joy*: as they muſt be the eternal ſubjects of thoſe infinitely richer communicati-

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ons from God, even of *immenſe and bound-leſs love and goodneſs.*

Do not debaſe this pleaſure by low thoughts, nor frame too daring *poſitive* apprehenſions of it. 'Tis, yet, a ſecret to us. The eternal converſes of the King of glory with glorified Spirits, are only known to himſelf and them. That expreſſion (which we ſo often meet in our way) *It doth not yet appear what we ſhall be*, ſeems left on purpoſe, to check a too curious and prying inquiſitiveneſs into theſe unrevealed things. The great God will have his reſerves of glory, of love, of pleaſure, for that future ſtate. Let him alone a while, with thoſe who are already received into thoſe manſions of glory, thoſe everlaſting habitations: He will find a time for thoſe that are yet Pilgrims and wandring Exiles to aſcend and enter too.

In the mean time, what we know of this communion may be gathered up into this general account, *The reciprocation of loves*; the flowing and reflowing of everlaſting love, between the bleſſed Soul and its infinitely bleſſed God; its egreſs towards him, his illapſes into it.

Unto ſuch pleaſure doth this likeneſs diſpoſe and qualifie: You can no way conſider it, but it appears a moſt pleaſurable ſatisfying thing.

Thus far have we ſhewn, the *qualification* for this bleſſedneſs, and the *nature* of it; *What it prerequires*, and *wherein it lies*: And, how highly congruous it is, that the former of theſe

theſe ſhould be made a pre-requiſite to the latter, will ſufficiently appear to any one, that ſhall, in his own thoughts, compare *this righteouſneſs* and *this bleſſedneſs* together. He will indeed plainly ſee, that the natural ſtate of the caſe and habitude of theſe each to other, makes this connexion unalterable and eternal; ſo as that it muſt needs be ſimply impoſſible, to be *thus bleſſed* without being *thus righteous*.

For what is this righteouſneſs other than *this bleſſedneſs begun*, the ſeed and principle of it? And that with as exact proportion (or rather ſameneſs of Nature) as is, between the grain ſown and reaped; which is more than intimated in that of the Apoſtle, *Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatſoever a man ſoweth, that ſhall he alſo reap: For he that ſoweth to his fleſh, ſhall, of the fleſh, reap corruption:* (there is the ſame proportion too) *but he that ſoweth to the Spirit, ſhall, of the Spirit, reap life everlaſting:* Which though it be ſpoken to a particular caſe, is yet ſpoken from a general rule and reaſon applicable a great deal further. Gal. 6. 7, 8.

And as ſome conceive (and is undertaken to be demonſtrated) that the ſeeds of things are not *virtually* only, but *actually* and *formally*, the very things themſelves: ſo is it here alſo. The very parts of this *bleſſedneſs* are diſcernable in this *righteouſneſs*, the *future viſion of God* in *preſent knowledg* of him: for this knowledg is a real, initial part of righteouſneſs; the rectitude of the mind and Dr. Harv. de Ovo.

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apprehensions concerning God, consisting in conformity to his revelation of himself.

Present holiness, including also the future *assimilation to God*: and the *contentment, and peace* that attends it, the *consequent satisfaction in glory.*

But, as in glory, the *impression of the divine likeness*, is that which *vision subserves*; and whence *satisfaction results*: so is it here (visibly) the main thing also. The end, and design of the Gospel-revelation, * of whole Christianity (I mean Systematically considered), of all Evangelical Doctrines and knowledg, is to restore Gods likeness and image; from whence *joy* and *peace* result of course, when once the Gospel is *believed.* The Gospel is the instrument of impressing Gods likeness, in order whereunto it must be *understood, and received into the mind.* Being so, the *impression upon the heart and life*, are Christianity *habitual* and *practical*, whereupon joy and pleasure (the belief or thorough reception of the Gospel thus intervening) do necessarily ensue, *Rom.* 15. 13.

So aptly is the only way or method, of *seeing Gods face so as to be satisfied with his likeness*; said to be, *in* or *thorow righteousness.*

* Πῶς ὅτι γινόμεθα καθ' ὁμοίωσιν; διὰ τῶν εὐαγγελίων. τί ἐστι χριστιανισμός; θεοῦ ὁμοίωσις: κατὰ τὸ ἐνδεχόμενον ἀνθρώπου φύσει. *Greg. Nyss. in verba* Faciamus hominem, &c. *Orat.* 1.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

The ſeaſon of this Satisfaction, *which is twofold; at* { Death, Reſurrection.

The former *ſpoken to; wherein is ſhewn, that this life is to the Soul (even of a Saint) but as a ſleep: that at Death it awakes. As to the* latter; *that there is a conſiderable acceſſion to its happineſs at the Reſurrection.*

3. THE *ſeaſon of this bleſſedneſs*, comes next to be conſidered; which (as the words [*when I awake*] have been concluded here to import) muſt, in the general, be ſtated, beyond the *time* of this preſent life.

Holy Souls are here *truly* bleſſed, not *perfectly*; or their preſent bleſſedneſs is perfect only in *nature* and *kind*, not in *degree*. 'Tis, *in this reſpect*, as far ſhort of perfection as their holineſs is. Their hunger and thirſt are *preſent*, their being fill'd is yet *future*. The experience of Saints in their beſt ſtate on earth, their deſires, their hopes, their ſighs and groans do ſufficiently witneſs they are not *ſatisfied*; or if they be in point of *ſecu-*

rity, they are not in point of *enjoyment*. The completion of this bleſſedneſs is reſerved to a better ſtate; as its being the *end of their* Mat. 5. 6. *way*, their *reſt from their labours*, the *reward of their work*, doth import and require. Therefore many Scriptures that ſpeak of their preſent *reſt*, *peace*, *repoſe*, *ſatisfaction*, muſt be underſtood in a comparative, not the abſolute higheſt ſenſe.

More particularly, *In that other ſtate*, the ſeaſon of their bleſſedneſs is twofold; or there are two terms from whence (in reſpect of ſome gradual or modal diverſifications) it may be ſaid ſeverally to commence, or bear date, *Viz.*

The time { Of their *entrance upon a bleſſed immortality*, when they ſhall have laid down their earthly Bodies, *in death*. Of their *conſummation therein*, when they receive their bodies glorified, *in the general reſurrection*.

Both theſe may not unfitly be ſignified by the Phraſe in the Text [*when I awake*]: For, though Scripture doth more directly apply the term of [*awaking*] to the latter, there will be no violence done to the Metaphor, if we extend its ſignification to the former alſo. To which purpoſe it is to be noted, that it is not *Death* formally, or the *diſanimating of the body*, we would have here to be underſtood by it (which indeed ſleeping would more aptly ſignifie than awaking), but (what is co-incident therewith in the ſame period) the exuſcitation and revival of the

the Soul. When the Body falls aſleep, then doth the Spirit awake, and the eye-lids of the morning, even of an eternal day, do now firſt open upon it.

I. Therefore we ſhall not exclude from this ſeaſon the introductive ſtate of bleſſedneſs, which takes its beginning from the bleſſed Souls firſt entrance into the inviſible ſtate. And the fitneſs of admitting it will appear by clearing theſe two things,

1. That its condition in this life, even at the beſt, is, in ſome ſort, but a ſleep.

2. That when it paſſes out of it into the inviſible Regions, 'tis truly ſaid to awake.

1. *Its abode in this mortal body, is but a continual ſleep*; its ſenſes are bound up, a drowſie ſlumber poſſeſſes and ſuſpends all its faculties and powers.

Before the renovating change, how frequently doth the Scripture ſpeak of ſinners as men aſleep? *Let not us ſleep as do others.* 1 Theſ. 5. 6. *Awake thou that ſleepeſt, and ſtand up from the dead*, &c. Eph. 5. 14. They are in a dead ſleep, under the ſleep of death: They apprehend things as men aſleep. How ſlight, obſcure, hovering notions have they of the moſt momentous things? and which it moſt concerns them to have thorough real apprehenſions of? All their thoughts of God, Chriſt, Heaven, Hell, of Sin, of Holineſs, are but uncertain wild gueſſes, blind hallucinations, incoherent phanſies; the abſurdity and inconcinnity whereof, they no more reflect upon than men aſleep. They *know not* theſe things,

but only *dream of them.* They put darkneſs for light, and light for darkneſs; have no ſenſes exerciſed to diſcern between good and evil. The moſt ſubſtantial realities are with them meer ſhadows, and *Chimera's*; *Phanſied and imagined dangers* ſtartle them (as 'tis wont to be with men in a dream), *Real ones*, though never ſo near them, they as little fear as *they.* The creature of their own imagination, the Lion in the way, which they dream of in their ſlothful ſlumber, affrights them; but the real roaring Lion that is ready to devour them, they are not afraid of.

And converſion doth but relax, and intermit; it doth not totally break off this ſleep; It, as it were, attenuates the conſopiting fumes, doth not utterly diſpel them. What a difficulty is it to watch but one hour? There are ſome lucid and vivid intervals, but of how ſhort continuance? how ſoon doth the awakened Soul cloſe its heavy eyes, and fall aſleep again? how often do temptations ſurprize *even ſuch*, in their ſlumbring fits, while no ſenſe of their danger can prevail with them *to watch and pray* (with due care and conſtancy) leſt they enter thereinto?

* *Hither* are moſt of the ſins of our lives to be imputed and refer'd; not to *meer ignorance*, that we know not ſin from duty, or what will pleaſe God, and what diſpleaſe him; but to a drowſie inadvertency, that

* So well doth the Apoſtles watch-word ſuite our caſe, *Awake to Righteouſneſs, and ſin not*, &c. 1 Cor. 15. 34.

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we keep not our ſpirits in a watchful conſidering poſture. Our *eyes*, that ſhould be *ever towards the Lord*, will not be kept open, and though we reſolve, we forget our ſelves; before we are aware, we find our ſelves overtaken; ſleep comes on upon us like an armed man, and we cannot avert it. How often do we hear, and read, and pray, and meditate as perſons aſleep? as if we knew not what we were about? How remarkable uſeful providences eſcape either our *notice* or *due improvement*, amidſt our ſecure ſlumbers? How many Viſits from heaven are loſt to us, when we are (as it were) between ſleeping and waking (*I ſleep, but my heart waketh*), Cant. 5. 2. and hardly own the voice that calls upon us, *till our beloved hath withdrawn himſelf?* Indeed, what is the whole of our life here but a dream? the entire ſcene of this ſenſible world but a *viſion of the night*? where every man *walks but in a vain ſhew*? where Pſal. 39. 6. we are mockt with ſhadows, and our credulous ſenſe abus'd by impoſtures and deluſive appearances? Nor are we ever ſecure from the moſt deſtructive miſchievous deception, further than as our Souls are poſſeſt with the apprehenſions, that this is the very truth of our caſe; and thence inſtructed to *conſider*, and not to prefer the ſhadows of time before the great realities of eternity.

Nor is this ſleep *caſual*, but even *connatural* to our preſent ſtate, the neceſſary reſult of ſo ſtrict an union and commerce with the body; which is, to the in-dwelling Spirit,

as a dormitory or charnel-houſe rather than a *manſion*. A Soul drench't in ſenſuality (a *Lethe* that hath too little of fiction in it), and immur'd in a ſloathful putid fleſh, ſleeps as it were by *fate* not by *chance*, and is only capable of full relief by ſuffering a Diſſolution; which it hath reaſon to welcome as a jubilee, and in the inſtant of departure to ſacrifice as he did * (with that eaſie and warrantable change, to make a Heathen expreſſion Scriptural) *Jehova liberatori*, to adore and praiſe its great Deliverer; At leaſt (accounts being once made up, and a *meetneſs* in any meaſure attained for *the heavenly inheritance*, &c.) hath no reaſon to regret or dread the approaches of the eternal day, more than we do the return of the Sun after a dark and long-ſome night. But, as the ſluggard doth nothing more unwillingly than forſake his bed, nor bears any thing with more regret, than to be awak't out of his ſweet ſleep, though you ſhould intice him with the pleaſures of a Paradiſe to quit a ſmoaky loathſom Cottage; ſo fares it with the ſluggiſh Soul, as if it were lodg'd in an inchanted Bed: 'tis ſo faſt held by the charms of the body, all the glory of the other world is little enough to tempt it out, than which there is not a more deplorable Symptom of this ſluggiſh ſlumbring ſtate. So deep an oblivion (which you know is alſo naturally incident to ſleep) hath ſeiz'd it of its own Country, of its alliances above, its relation to the Father and world of Spirits; it takes this

* Viz. *Seneca*. Who at the time of his death ſprinkled water upon the ſervants about him, *addità voce, ſe liquorem illum libare Jovi liberatori*. Tacit. Annal.

this earth for its home, where 'tis both in exile and captivity at once: and (as a Prince, ſtoln away in his infancy, and bred up in a beggars ſhed) ſo little *ſeeks*, that it *declines* a better ſtate. This is the degenerous torpid diſpoſition of a Soul loſt in fleſh, and inwrapt in ſtupifying clay; which hath been deeply reſented by ſome Heathens. So one brings in *Socrates* pathetically bewailing this oblivious dreaming temper of his Soul, "which "(ſaith he) had ſeen that pulchritude (you "muſt pardon him, here, the conceit of its "pre-exiſtence) that neither human voice "could utter, nor eye behold; But that now, "in this life, it had only ſome little remem-"brance thereof, as in a dream; being both "in reſpect of *place* and *condition*, far remo-"ved from ſo pleaſant ſights, preſt down in-"to an earthly ſtation, and there encompaſt "with all manner of dirt and filthineſs, &c.

And to the ſame purpoſe *Plato* often ſpeaks in the name of the ſame perſon; and particularly, of the *winged ſtate* of the good Soul*, when apart from the body, carried in its triumphant flying Chariot (of which he gives a large deſcription, ſomewhat reſembling *Solomons* rapturous Metaphor, *Before I was aware, my ſoul made me as the Chariots of Amminadib*); But being in the body, 'tis with it as with a Bird that hath loſt its wings, it falls a ſluggiſh weight to the earth.

ἀτέρωμα.

* In Phædre.

Cant. 6. 12

Which indeed is the ſtate even of the beſt, in a degree, within this Tabernacle. A ſleepy torpor ſtops their flight; they can fall, but

not aſcend; the *remains* of ſuch drowſineſs do ſtill hang even about Saints themſelves. The Apoſtle therefore calls upon *ſuch*, to *awake out of ſleep*; from that conſideration (as we know men are not wont to ſleep ſo intenſely towards morning) *that now their ſalvation was nearer than when they believed*, i. e. (as ſome judicious Interpreters underſtand that place) for that they were nearer death, and eternity than when they firſt became Chriſtians (though this paſſage be alſo otherwiſe, and not improbably, interpreted). However,

Rom. 13. 11.

Aretius, Beza, &c.

2. *The holy Souls releaſe and diſmiſſion from its earthly body* (which is that we propounded next to be conſidered) *will exauſſe and ſhake off this drowſie ſleep.* Now is the happy Seaſon of its awaking into the heavenly vital light of God; the bleſſed morning of that long deſired day is now dawned upon it; the cumberſom night-vail is laid aſide, and the garments of ſalvation and immortal glory are now put on. It hath paſt through the trouble and darkneſs of a weariſom night, and now is joy arrived with the morning (as we may be permitted to allude to thoſe words of the *Pſalmiſt*, though that be not ſuppoſed to be the peculiar ſenſe).

Pſal. 30. 5.

I conceive my ſelf here not concern'd *operouſly* to inſiſt in proving, that the Souls of Saints ſleep not in the interval between death and the general reſurrection; but enjoy preſent bleſſedneſs. It being beſides the deſign of a practical diſcourſe, which rather intends

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the propounding and improvement of things acknowledg'd and agreed, for the advantage and benefit of them with whom they are ſo; than the diſcuſſing of things dubious and controverſible. And what I here propound in order to a conſequent improvement and application, ſhould methinks paſs for an acknowledg'd truth, among them that profeſſedly believe and ſeriouſly read and conſider the Bible; (For meer Philoſophers that do not come into this account, 'twere impertinent to diſcourſe with them from a Text of Scripture) and where my deſign only obliges me to intend the handling of that, and to deliver from it what may fitly be ſuppoſed to have its ground there; unleſs their allegations did carry with them the *ſhew* of demonſtrating the ſimple impoſſibility of what is aſſerted thence to the power of that God whoſe word we take it to be; which I have not found any thing they ſay to amount to. That we have reaſon to preſume it an acknowledged thing, among them that will be concluded by Scripture, *That the ſoul doth not ſleep when it ceaſes to animate its earthly body*, many plain Texts do evince, which are amaſſed together by the reverend Mr. *Baxter* *; ſome of the principal whereof I would invite any that waver in this matter ſeriouſly to conſider: As the words of our Saviour to the Thief on the Croſs, *This day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe.* That of the Apoſtle, *We are willing rather to be abſent from the body, and preſent with the Lord.* And that, *I am in a*

* In his Saints reſt, *p.* 2. *c.* 10.

Luk. 23. 43.

2 Cor. 5. 8.

ſtraight,

Phil. 1.23. Heb. 12. 23. *ſtraight, having a deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt.* That paſſage, *The Spirits of juſt men made perfect*, &c. Which are expreſſions ſo clear, that it is hard for an induſtrious Caviller to find what to except to them; and indeed, the very exceptions that are put in, are ſo frivolous, that they carry a plain confeſſion there is nothing colourable to be ſaid.

'Tis true, that divers of the Fathers and others, have ſpoken, ſome dubiouſly, ſome very diminiſhingly of the bleſſedneſs of ſeparate Souls; many of whoſe words may be ſeen together in that elaborate Tractate of the learned *Parker, de deſcenſ. lib. ſecund. p.* 77. Yea, and his own aſſertion in that very page (be it ſpoken with reverence to the memory of ſo worthy a perſon) argues ſomething groſs, and I conceive, unwarrantable thoughts of the Souls dependance on a body of Earth. His words are, *Tertium vulnus* (ſpeaking of the prejudices the Soul receives by its ſeparation from the body) *omnes operationes ejus, quæ ſunt præſertim ad extrà, extinguit.* Where he makes it a difficulty to allow it any operations at all, as appears by the *præſertim* inſerted. He firſt indeed denies it all operations, and then, more confidently and eſpecially, thoſe *ad extrà*. And if he would be underſtood to exclude it only from its operations *ad extrà* (if he take operations *ad extrà* as that Phraſe is wont to be taken) he muſt then mean by it, all ſuch operations as have *their objects*, not only thoſe that have their *terms to which* without the Agent, *i.e.* not only all tranſient, but all immanent acts that have their objects without them. As when we ſay, all Gods acts *ad extrà* are free; we mean it even of his immanent acts that have their objects without him, though they do not *ponere terminum extra Deum*; as his election, his love of the elect. And ſo he muſt be underſtood to deny the ſeparate Souls (and that with a *præſertim* too) the operations of *knowing God*, of loving him, and delighting in him; which are all operations *ad extrà*, as having their objects *extra animam*, though their *terminus ad quem* be not ſo; which makes the condition of the ſeparate Souls of Saints unſpeakably inferiour to what it was in the body, and what ſhould

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Yea and moſt evident it is from thoſe Texts; not only that holy Souls ſleep not, in that ſtate of ſeparation; but that they are awaked by it (as out of a former ſleep) into a much more lively and vigorous activity than they enjoyed before; and tranſlated into a ſtate, occaſion ſo diſmal thoughts of that ſtate of ſeparation, I ſee not. Scripture gives no ground for them, but evidently enough ſpeaks the contrary. Reaſon and Philoſophy offer nothing, that can render the ſenſe we put upon the forementioned plain Scriptures, ſelf-contradictious or impoſſible. Yea, ſuch as had no other light or guide, have thought the facility of the Souls operations, being ſeparate from its earthly body, much greater by that very ſeparation. And upon this ſcore doth Saint *Auguſtine*, with great indignation, inveigh againſt the Philoſophers (*Plato* more eſpecially), becauſe they judg'd the ſeparation of the Soul from the body neceſſary to its bleſſedneſs. [*Quia videlicet ejus perfectam beatitudinem tunc illi fieri exiſtimant cum omni prorſus corpore exuta, ad Deum ſimplex, & ſola & quodammodo nuda redierit.* De civit. Dei l. 13. c. 16.] unto which purpoſe the words of *Philolaus Pythagoricus*, of *Plato*, of *Porphyrius* are cited by *Ludovicus Vives* in his Comment upon that bovementioned paſſage. The firſt ſpeaking thus—*Depoſito corpore hominem Deum immortalem fieri.* The ſecond thus,—*Trahi nos à corpore ad ipſa, & à cogitationibus ſopiſtarum rerum ſubinde revocari: ideo relinquendum corpus, & ut quantum poſſumus & in altera vita prorſum, ut liberi & expediti, verum ipſi videamus & optimum amemus.* The third denies—*Aliter fieri beatum quenquam poſſe, niſi relinquat corpus & aſſequatur Deo.* I conceive it by the way not improbable, that the ſeverity of that pious Father againſt that Dogma of the Philoſophers, might proceed upon this ground, that what they ſaid of the impoſſibility of being happy in *an earthly body*, he underſtood meant by them of an impoſſibility to be happy *in any body at all*; when 'tis evidently the common opinion of the *Platoniſts*, that the Soul is always united with ſome body or other, and that even the *Damons* have bodies (aereal or æthereal ones); which *Plato* himſelf is obſerved by St. *Auguſtine* to affirm, whence he would faſten a contradiction on him, *ibid.* not conſidering ('tis likely) that he would much leſs have made a difficulty, to concede ſuch bodies alſo to humane Souls after they had loſt their

terreſtrial as much better than their former, as the *tortures of a Croſs* are more ungrateful than *the* Sectators *pleaſures of a Paradiſe*; *theſe* joys fuller of vi- do not; who hold, tality, than *thoſe* ſickly dying faintings; as the they then *immediate preſence*, and *cloſe embraces* of the preſently become *Demons.*

In the mean time 'tis evident enough, the doctrine of the ſeparate Souls preſent bleſſedneſs, is not deſtitute of the patronage and ſuffrage of Philoſophers. And 'tis indeed the known opinion of as many of them as ever held its immortality (which all of all Ages and Nations have done, a very few excepted), for in as much as they knew nothing of the reſurrection of the body, they could not dream of a *ſleeping interval.*

And 'tis, at leaſt, a ſhrewd preſumption that nothing in reaſon lies againſt it, when no one inſtance can be given, among them that profeſſedly gave up themſelves to its only guidance, of any one, that granting the immortality of the Soul, and its ſeparableneſs from its terreſtrial body, ever denied the immediate bleſſedneſs of good Souls in that ſtate of ſeparation. Nor (if we look into the thing it ſelf) is it at all more unapprehenſible that the Soul ſhould be independent on the body in its operations than in its exiſtence?

If it be poſſible enough to form an unexceptionable notion of a ſpiritual being, diſtinct and ſeparable from any corporeal ſubſtance (which the learned Doctor *More* hath ſufficiently demonſtrated in his Treatiſe of the immortality of the Soul), with its proper attributes, and powers peculiar to it ſelf; what can reaſonably with-hold me from aſſerting, that, being ſeparate from the body, it may as well operate alone, (I mean exert ſuch operations as are proper to ſuch a being) as exiſt alone? That we find it here, *de facto*, in its preſent ſtate, acting only with dependance on a body, will no more infer, that it can act no otherwiſe, than its preſent exiſtence in a body will, that it can never exiſt out of it, neither whereof amounts to more than the trifling exploded argument *à non eſſe ad non poſſe*, and would be as good ſenſe as to ſay, Such a one walks in his clothes, therefore out of them he cannot move a foot.

Yea and the very *uſe* it ſelf which the Soul now makes of corporeal organs and inſtruments, plainly evinces, that it doth

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Lord of life are more delectable than a *mournful diſconſolate abſence* from him (which the Apoſtle therefore tells us he deſired *as far better*, and with an *Emphaſis* which our *Engliſh* too faintly expreſſes; for he uſes a double

exert *ſome action* wherein they aſſiſt it not. For it ſuppoſes

an operation *upon them* antecedent to any operation *by them*. Nothing can be the *inſtrument* which is not firſt the *ſubject* of my action; as when I uſe a Pen, I act *upon* in order to my acting *by* it, *i.e.* I impreſs a motion upon it, in order whereunto I uſe not that or any other ſuch inſtrument; And, though I cannot produce the deſigned effect, leave ſuch characters ſo and ſo figured, without it; my hand can yet, without it, perform its own action, proper to it ſelf, and produce many nobler effects. When therefore the Soul makes uſe of a bodily organ, its action *upon* it muſt needs, at laſt, be without the miniſtry of any organ, unleſs you multiply to it body upon body *in infinitum*.

And if poſſibly, it perform not ſome meaner and groſſer pieces of drudgery when out of the body, wherein it made uſe of its help and ſervice before; that, is no more a diſparagement or diminution, than it is to the Magiſtrate, that *law* and *decency* permit him not to apprehend or execute a Malefactor with his own hand. It may yet perform thoſe operations which are proper to it ſelf; that is, ſuch as are more noble and excellent, and immediately conducive to its own felicity.

Which ſort of actions, as *Cogitation* for inſtance, and *Dilection*, though, being done in the body, there is conjunct with them an agitation of the Spirits in the brain and heart; It yet ſeems to me more reaſonable, that, as to thoſe acts, the Spirits are rather ſubjects than inſtruments at all of them; that the whole eſſence of theſe Acts is antecedent to the motion of the Spirits; and that motion *certainly* (but *accidentally*) conſequent, only by reaſon of the *preſent* but *ſoluble* union the Soul hath with the body. And that the purity and refinedneſs of thoſe Spirits doth only *remove what would hinder* ſuch acts, rather than contribute *poſitively* thereto. And ſo little is the alliance between a *thought* and any bodily thing, even thoſe very fineſt Spirits themſelves; that I dare ſay, whoever ſets himſelf cloſely and ſtrictly to conſider and debate the matter with his own faculties, will find it much more eaſily apprehenſible, how the acts of

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intellection and volition may be performed *without* thoſe very corporeal Spirits than *by them.*

comparative [πολλῷ μᾶλλον κρεῖσσον] *by much more better*); and, as a *perfected*, i. e. a *crowned triumphant Spirit*, that hath attained the *end of its race* (as the words import in the agoniſtical notion *) is, now, in a more vivid joyous ſtate, than when, lately, *toiling* in a *tireſom way*, it languiſhed un-

* See Dr. *Hammonds* annot. in loc.

However ſuppoſe them never ſo indiſpenſably neceſſary to thoſe more noble operations of the Soul, it may eaſily be furniſht with them, and in greater plenty and purity, from the ambient air (or æther) than from a dull torpid body; with ſome part of which air, if we ſuppoſe it to contract a vital union; I know no rational principle that is wronged by the ſuppoſition, (though neither do I know any that can neceſſarily infer it).

As therefore the doctrine of the Souls activity out of this earthly body, hath favour and friendſhip enough from Philoſophers; ſo I doubt not, but upon the moſt ſtrict and rigid diſquiſition, it would be as much befriended (or rather righted) by Philoſophy it ſelf; And that their *reaſon* would afford it as direct, and more conſiderable defence, than their *Authority.*

In the mean time, it deſerves to be conſidered with ſome reſentment, that this Doctrine ſhould find the generality of learned Pagans more forward Advocates than ſome learned and worthy Patrons of the Chriſtian Faith; which is only imputable to the undue meaſure and exceſs of an, otherwiſe, juſt zeal, in theſe latter, *for the reſurrection of the body*; ſo far tranſporting them, that they became willing to let go *one* Truth, that they might hold *another* the faſter; and to ranſom *this* at the too dear (and unneceſſary) expence of the *former*: Accounting, they could never make ſure enough the reſurrection of the body, without making the Souls dependence on it ſo abſolute and neceſſary, that it ſhould be able to do nothing but ſleep in the mean while. Whereas it ſeems a great deal more unconceivable, how ſuch a being as the Soul is, once quit of the entanglements and encumbrances of the body, *ſhould ſleep at all*, than how it ſhould *act without the body.*

der many imperfections. And it is obſervable, that in the three former Scriptures that phraſe, of *being with Chriſt*, or, *being preſent with him*, is the ſame which is uſed by the Apoſtle, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 17. to expreſs the ſtate of bleſſedneſs after the reſurrection; intimating plainly, the *ſameneſs* of the bleſſedneſs before and after. And though this phraſe be alſo uſed to ſignifie the preſent enjoyment Saints have of Gods gracious preſence in this life (which is alſo in *nature*, and *kind* the ſame), yet it is plainly uſed in theſe Scriptures (the two latter more eſpecially) to ſet out to us *ſuch a degree* of that bleſſedneſs, that in compariſon thereof, our *preſent being with Chriſt* is a *not-being with him*; our *preſence with him*, now, an *abſence from him: While we are at home in the body, we are abſent from the Lord*; and, *I am in a ſtrait betwixt two, deſiring to depart* (or having a deſire unto diſſolution) *and to be with Chriſt*, &c. How ſtrangely miſtaken and diſappointed had the bleſſed Apoſtle been, had his abſence from the body, his diſſolution, his releaſe, ſet him further off from Chriſt, or made him leſs capable of converſe with him, than before he was? And how abſurd would it be to ſay, the *ſpirits of the juſt are perfected*, by being caſt into a ſtupifying ſleep; yea, or being put into any ſtate, not better than they were in before? But their ſtate is evidently far better. The body of death is now laid aſide, and the weights of ſin, that did ſo eaſily beſet,

beſet, are ſhaken off; fleſh and ſin are laid down together; the Soul is rid of its burthenſom bands and ſhackles, hath quitted its filthy darkſom priſon (the uſual place of lazineſs and ſloth), is come forth of its drowſie dormitory, and the glory of God is riſen upon it. 'Tis now come into the *world of realities*, where things appear *as they are*; no longer as in a dream, or viſion of the night. The vital quickning beams of divine light are darting in upon it on every ſide, and turning it into their own likeneſs. The ſhadows of the evening are vaniſhed, and fled away. It converſes with no other objects but what are full themſelves, and moſt apt to repleniſh it with energy and life. This cannot be but a joyful awaking, a bleſſed ſeaſon of ſatisfaction and delight indeed, to the enlightned revived Soul. But,

II. It muſt be acknowledged, the further and more eminent ſeaſon of this bleſſedneſs will be the *general Reſurrection day*, which is more expreſly ſignified in Scripture by this term of [*awaking*]; as is manifeſt in many plain Texts, where 'tis either *expreſly* thus uſed, or implied to have this meaning in the oppoſite ſenſe of the word *ſleep*.

Dan. 12.2. Joh. 14.12. 2 Cor. 15. 2 Theſ. 4. &c.

What addition ſhall then be made to the Saints bleſſedneſs, lies more remote from our apprehenſion; in as much as Scripture ſtates not the *degree* of that bleſſedneſs which ſhall intervene. We know, by a too ſad inſtructive experience, the calamities of our preſent ſtate, and can therefore more eaſily conceive, where-

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in it is capable of betterment, by the depoſition of a ſluggiſh cumberſom body, where thoſe calamities moſtly have their ſpring: but then we know leſs where to fix our foot, or whence to take our riſe, in eſtimating the additional felicities of that *future ſtate*, when both the ſtates to be compared are ſo unknown to us.

But *that* there will be great additions is plain enough. The *full* recompence of obedience, and devotedneſs to Chriſt, of forgoing all for him, is affixed by his promiſe *to the reſurrection of the juſt*; The *judgment day* gives every one his portion *according to his works*. Then muſt the holy obedient Chriſtian hear from its Redeemers mouth, *Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom*, &c. Till then, the Devils think their *torment to be before their time*. 'Tis, *when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him, and ſee him as he is*. That noted day is the day of *being preſented faultleſs with exceeding joy*.

And divers things there are obviouſly enough to be reflected on, which cannot but be underſtood to contribute much to the increaſe and improvement of this inchoate bleſſedneſs.

The acquiſition of a glorified body. For our vile bodies ſhall be ſo far *transfigured*, as to *be made like* [conform to] *the glorious body of the Saviour, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. And this ſhall be when he ſhall appear *from heaven*, where Saints here below are required μετασχηματίσει σύμμορφον. Phil. 3. 20, 21.

to have their commerce, as the infranchiſed Citizens thereof, and from whence they are to continue looking for him, in the mean time. When he terminates and puts a period to that expectation of his Saints on earth, then ſhall that great change be made, *i.e.* when he actually appears, at which time the

1 Theſ. 4. 14,15,16. *trumpet ſounds*, and even *ſleeping duſt it ſelf awakes*; the hallowed duſt of them that ſlept in Jeſus firſt, who are then to come with him. This change may well be conceived to add, conſiderably, to their felicity. A natural congruity and appetite, is now anſwered and ſatisfied, which did either lie dormant, or was under ſomewhat an anxious reſtleſs expectation before; neither of which could well conſiſt with a ſtate of bleſſedneſs, every way already perfect. And that there is a real *deſire and expectation* of this change, ſeems to be plainly intimated in thoſe words of *Job*, *All the dayt of my appointed time will I wait till my change come:* Where he muſt rather be underſtood to ſpeak of the reſurrection than of death (as his words are commonly miſtaken, and miſapplied); as will appear by ſetting down the Context from the ſeventh verſe, *For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will ſprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not ceaſe. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the ſtock thereof die in the ground: yet through the ſent of water, it will bud and bring forth boughs like a plant. But man dieth and waſteth away;*

Chap. 14. 14.

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yea man giveth up the Ghoſt, and where is he? As the waters fail from the Sea, and the flood decayeth, and dryeth up; ſo man lyeth down, and riſeth not till the heavens be no more: they ſhall not be awaked nor raiſed out of their ſleep. O that thou wouldeſt hide me in the grave, that thou wouldeſt keep me ſecret till thy wrath be paſt, that thou wouldeſt appoint me a ſet time, and remember me! If a man die, ſhall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come. Thou ſhalt call, and I will anſwer thee; thou wilt have a deſire to the work of thy hands. He firſt ſpeaks according to common apprehenſion, and ſenſible appearance, touching the hopeleſs ſtate of man in death; as though it were leſs capable of reparation than that of ſome inferiour creatures, unto the end of *ver.* 10. And then, *gradually*, diſcovers his better hope; bewrays his Faith, as it were *obliquely*, touching this point; lets it break out, firſt, in ſome obſcure glimmerings, *ver.* 11, 12. giving us, in his *Protaſis*, a ſimilitude not fully expreſſive of his ſeeming meaning, for waters and floods that fail may be renewed; and in his *Apodoſis* more openly intimating, mans ſleep ſhould be only till *the heavens were no more:* which [till] might be ſuppoſed to ſignifie [never], were it not for what follows *ver.* 13. where he expreſly ſpeaks his confidence by way of *petition*, that at *a ſet and appointed time*, *God would remember him*, ſo as to re-call him out of the Grave: and at laſt,

being now minded to ſpeak out more fully, puts the queſtion to himſelf, *If a man dye, ſhall he live again?* and anſwers it, *All the days of my appointed time*, *i.e.* of that appointed time which he mention'd before, when God ſhould revive him out of the duſt, *will I wait till my change come*, *i.e.* that glorious change, when the corruption of a *loathſom grave* ſhould be exchang'd for *immortal glory*, which he amplifies, and utters more expreſly, *ver.* 15, *Thou ſhalt call, and I will anſwer; thou ſhalt have a deſire to the work of thy hands:* Thou wilt not always forget to reſtore and perfect thy own creature.

And ſurely that *waiting* is not the *act* of his inanimate ſleeping duſt; but, though it be ſpoken of the *perſon* totally gone into *Hades*, into the inviſible ſtate; 'tis to be underſtood of that part, that ſhould be capable of ſuch an action; *q.d.* I, in that part that ſhall be ſtill alive, ſhall patiently await thy appointed time of reviving me in that part alſo, which Death and the Grave ſhall inſult over (in a temporary triumph) in the mean time; And ſo will the words carry a facile commodious ſenſe, without the unneceſſary help of an imagined Rhetorical Scheme of Speech. And then, that this *waiting* carries in it *a deſirous expectation* of ſome additional good, is evident at firſt ſight; which therefore muſt needs add to the ſatisfaction and bleſſedneſs of the expecting Soul. And wherein it may do ſo,

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is not altogether unapprehenſible. Admit that a Spirit, had it never been imbodied, might be as well without a body, or that it might be as well provided of a body out of other materials; 'tis no unreaſonable ſuppoſition, that *a connate aptitude to a body, ſhould render humane Souls more happy in a body ſufficiently attempered to their moſt noble operations.* And how much doth relation and propriety endear things, otherwiſe mean and inconſiderable? or why ſhould it be thought ſtrange, that a Soul *connaturalized to matter*, ſhould be more particularly inclined to a particular portion thereof? ſo as that it ſhould appropriate ſuch a part, and ſay *'tis mine*? And will it not be a pleaſure, to have a vitality diffuſed through what even more remotely appertains to me, to have every thing belonging to the *Suppoſitum* perfectly vindicated from the tyrannous dominion of Death? The returning of the ſpirits into a benumb'd or ſleeping toe or finger, adds a contentment to a man which he wanted before. Nor is it hence neceſſary the Soul ſhould covet a re-union with every effluvious particle of its former body: A deſire implanted by God in a reaſonable Soul will aim at what is *convenient*, not what ſhall be *cumberſom*, or *monſtrous*.

And how pleaſant will it be to contemplate and admire the wiſdom and power of the great Creator in this ſo glorious a change, when I ſhall find a Clod of Earth, an Heap of Duſt, refined into a Celeſtial purity and

brightneſs? when what *was ſown in corrup-*
1 Cor. 15. *tion ſhall be raiſed in incorruption*; what *was ſown in diſhonour, is raiſed in glory*; what *was ſown in weakneſs, is raiſed in power*; what *was ſown a natural body, is raiſed a ſpiritual body?* when this *corruptible ſhall have put on incorruption*, and *this mortal, immortality*, and *death be wholly ſwallowed up in victory?* So that this *awaking* may well be underſtood to carry that in it, which may beſpeak it the proper ſeaſon of the Saints *conſummate ſatisfaction and bleſſedneſs.* But *beſides* what it carries in it ſelf, there are other (more extrinſecal) concurrents that do further ſignalize this ſeaſon, and import a great increaſe of bleſſedneſs, *then*, to Gods holy ones.

The body of Chriſt is now compleated, *the fulneſs of him that filleth all in all*, and all the ſo nearly related parts cannot but partake in the perfection, and reflected glory of the whole. There is joy in Heaven at the converſion of one ſinner, though he have a troubleſom Scene yet to paſs over afterwards, in a tempting wicked unquiet world; how much more *when the many ſons ſhall be all brought to glory together?*

The deſigns are all now accompliſhed, and wound up into the moſt glorious reſult and iſſue; whereof the Divine Providence had been, as in travel, for ſo many thouſand years. 'Tis now ſeen how exquiſite wiſdom govern'd the world, and how

how ſteady a tendency the moſt intricate and perplexed Methods of Providence had, to one ſtated and moſt worthy end.

Specially the conſtitution, adminiſtration, and ends of the Mediators Kingdom, are now beheld, in their exact aptitudes, order, and conſpicuous glory; when ſo bleſſed an iſſue and ſucceſs ſhall commend and crown the whole undertaking.

The *Divine Authority* is now univerſally acknowledged, and adored; his *Juſtice* is vindicated, and ſatisfied; his *Grace* demonſtrated, and magnified to the uttermoſt. The whole aſſembly of Saints ſolemnly acquitted by publique ſentence, preſented ſpotleſs and without blemiſh to God, and adjudged to eternal bleſſedneſs. 'Tis the day of ſolemn triumph and jubilation, upon the finiſhing of all Gods works, from the creation of the world, *wherein* the Lord Jeſus *appears to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all that believe*; Upon which enſues the reſignation of *the Mediators Kingdom* (all the ends of it being now attained) *that the Father himſelf may be immediately all in all.* How aptly then are the fuller manifeſtations of God, the more glorious diſplay of all his Attributes, the larger and more abundant Effuſions of himſelf, reſerv'd (as the beſt Wine to the laſt) unto this joyful day? Created perfections could not have been before ſo abſolute, but they might admit of improvement; their ca-

2 Theſ. 1.

1 Cor. 15.

pacities not ſo large, but they might be extended further; and then who can doubt but that divine communications may alſo have a proportionable increaſe, and that upon the concourſe of ſo many great occaſions they ſhall have ſo?

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

An Introduction to the uſe of the Doctrine hitherto propoſed. The Uſe *divided into* Inferences of Truth, Rules of Duty. 1. Inference, *That Bleſſedneſs conſiſts not in any ſenſual enjoyment.* 2. Inference, *The Spirit of man (ſince 'tis capable of ſo high a Bleſſedneſs) is a Being of high excellency.*

Uſe.

AND now is our greateſt work yet behind; the improvement of ſo momentous a truth, to the affecting and transforming of hearts: that (if the Lord ſhall ſo far vouchſafe his aſſiſtance and bleſſing) they may taſte the ſweetneſs, feel the power, and bear the impreſs and image of it. This is the work, both of greateſt neceſſity, difficulty, and excellency, and unto which all that hath been done hitherto is but ſubſervient and introductive. Give me leave therefore, Reader, to ſtop thee here, and demand of thee ere thou go further; Haſt thou any deſign, in turning over theſe leaves, of bettering thy Spirit? of getting a more refined heavenly temper of Soul? art thou weary of thy dross,

droſs, and earth, and longing for the firſt fruits, the beginnings of glory? doſt thou wiſh for a Soul meet for the bleſſedneſs hitherto deſcribed? What is here written, is deſigned for thy help and furtherance. But if thou art looking on theſe pages, with a wanton rolling eye, hunting for novelties, or what may gratifie a prurient wit, a coy and ſqueamiſh fancy; Go read a Romance, or ſome piece of Drollery; Know, here's nothing for thy turn; and dread to meddle with matters of everlaſting concernment without a ſerious ſpirit; Read not another line till thou have ſighed out this requeſt, Lord keep me from trifling with the things of Eternity. Charge thy Soul to conſider, that what thou art now reading muſt be added to thy account againſt the great day. 'Tis amazing to think, with what vanity of mind, the moſt weighty things of Religion are entertained amongſt Chriſtians. Things that ſhould ſwallow up our Souls, drink up our ſpirits, are heard as a tale that is told, diſregarded by moſt, ſcorned by too many. What can be ſpoken ſo important, or of ſo tremendous conſequence, or of ſo confeſſed truth, or with ſo awful ſolemnity, and premiſed mention of the ſacred name of the Lord, as not to find either a very ſlight entertainment, or contemptuous rejection? and this by perſons avowing themſelves Chriſtians? We ſeem to have little or no advantage, in urging men upon their own principles, and with things they moſt readily and profeſſedly aſſent to.

Diſſolati eſt pectoris in rebus ſtrilis quærere voluptatem. Arnob.

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Their hearts are as much untoucht, and void of impreſſion by the Chriſtian Doctrine, as if they were of another Religion. How unlike is the Chriſtian World to the Chriſtian Doctrine! The Seal is fair and excellent, but the Impreſſion is languid, or not viſible. Where is that ſerious godlineſs, that heavenlineſs, that purity, that ſpirituality, that righteouſneſs, that peace, unto which the Chriſtian Religion is moſt aptly deſigned to work and form the ſpirits of men? We think to be ſaved by an empty name; and glory in the ſhew and appearance of that, the life and power whereof we hate and deride. 'Tis a reproach with us not to be *called a Chriſtian*, and a greater reproach *to be one*. If ſuch and ſuch Doctrines *obtain not* in our profeſſed Belief, we are Hereticks or Infidels; if they *do* in our practice, we are Preciſians and Fools. To be ſo ſerious, and circumſpect, and ſtrict, and holy, to make the practice of godlineſs ſo much our buſineſs, as the known and avowed principles of our Religion do plainly exact from us (yea though we come, as we cannot but do, unſpeakably ſhort of that required meaſure), is to make ones ſelf a common deriſion and ſcorn. Not to be profeſſedly religious is *barbarous*, to be ſo in good earneſt *ridiculous*. In other things, men are wont to act and practiſe according to the known Rules of their ſeveral Callings and Profeſſions, and he would be reckon'd the common fool of the neighbour-hood that ſhould not do ſo. The Husbandman that

ſhould

ſhould ſow when others reap, or contrive his Harveſt into the depth of Winter, or ſow Fitches and expect to reap Wheat; The Merchant that ſhould venture abroad his moſt precious Commodities in a leaky bottom, without Pilot or Compaſs, or to places not likely to afford him any valuable return. In Religion only it muſt be accounted abſurd, to be and do according to its known agreed Principles, and he a fool that ſhall but *practiſe* as all about him profeſs to *believe*. Lord! whence is this apprehended inconſiſtency between the profeſſion and practice of Religion? what hath thus ſtupify'd and unman'd the world? that ſerioufneſs in Religion ſhould be thought the character of a fool? that men muſt viſibly make a mockery of the moſt Fundamental Articles of Faith only to ſave their reputation, and be afraid to be ſerious, leſt they ſhould be thought mad! Were the Doctrine here opened believed in earneſt, were the due proper impreſs of it upon our ſpirits, or (as the Pagan Moraliſts expreſſion is) were our minds *transfigured into it*; *what manner of perſons ſhould we be, in all holy converſation and godlineſs?*

Scientiam qui didicit, & facienda & vitanda percepit, nondum ſapiens eſt, niſi in ea quæ didicit transfiguratus eſt animus. Sen. Ep. 94.

But 'tis thought enough to have it in our Creed, though never in our hearts; and ſuch as will not *deride* the holineſs it ſhould produce, yet *endeavour* it not, nor go about to apply and urge truths upon their own ſouls to

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any ſuch purpoſe. What ſhould turn into Grace and Spirit and Life, turns all into Notion and Talk; and men think all is well, if their head be fill'd, and their tongues tipt, with what ſhould transform their ſouls, and govern their lives. How are the moſt awful Truths, and that ſhould have greateſt power upon mens Spirits, trifled with, as matters only of ſpeculation and diſcourſe! They are heard but as empty airy words, and preſently evaporate, paſs away into words again; like food (as *Seneca* ſpeaks) "that comes up preſently, the ſame that it was "taken in; which (as he ſaith) profits not, "nor makes any acceſſion to the body at all. A like caſe (as another ingeniouſly ſpeaks), "as if ſheep when they have been feeding "ſhould preſent their Shepherds with the ve- "ry graſs it ſelf which they have cropt, and "ſhew how much they had eaten. No, ſaith he, "they concoct it, and ſo yeild them Wool and "Milk. And ſo (ſaith he) do not you (*viz.* "when you have been inſtructed) preſently "go and utter words among the more ignorant (meaning they ſhould not do ſo in a way of oſtentation, to ſhew how much they knew more than others), "but works that follow "upon the concoction of what hath been by "words made known to them. (Let Chriſtians be aſhamed that they need this inſtruction from Heathen Teachers).

Non prodeſt cibus, nec corpori accedit, qui ſtatim ſumptus emittitur. Sen. Epiſt.

Ἐποὶ καὶ τὰ πρόβατα. ἡ χορτὸν φέροντα τοῖς ποιμέσιν ἐπιδεικνύουσι πόσον ἔφαγον, ἀλλὰ τὴν νομὴν ἔσω πέψαντα, ἔριον ἔξω φέρει καὶ γάλα, καὶ σὺ τοίνυν μὴ ταχύως ῥήματα τοῖς ἰδιώταις ἐπιδείκνυε· ἀλλὰ ἀπ' αὐτῶν πεφθέντων τὰ ἔργα. *Epictet.*

Thy

Thy words were found, and I did eat them (ſaith the Prophet), *and thy word was to me the joy, and rejoicing of my heart.* Divine truth is only ſo far at preſent *grateful*, or *uſeful* for *future*, as 'tis received by *faith* and *conſideration*, and in the love thereof into the very heart, and there turned (in *ſuccum & ſanguinem*) into real nutriment to the Soul: So ſhall man *live by the word of God.* Hence is the application of it (both *perſonal* and *miniſterial*) of ſo great neceſſity.

If the Truths of the Goſpel were of the ſame alloy with ſome parts of Philoſophy, whoſe end is attained as ſoon as they are known; if the Scripture Doctrine (the whole entire Syſtem of it) were not a Doctrine after godlineſs; if it were not deſigned to ſanctifie and make men holy; or, if the hearts of men did not reluctate, were eaſily receptive of its impreſſions; our work were as ſoon done, as ſuch a Doctrine were nakedly propoſed: But the ſtate of the caſe in theſe reſpects is known and evident. The tenour and aſpect of Goſpel Truth ſpeaks its end; and experience too plainly ſpeaks the oppoſiteneſs of mens ſpirits. All (therefore) we read and hear is loſt if it be not urgently apply'd: (The Lord grant it be not ſo then too).

Therefore, Reader, let thy mind and heart concur in the following improvement of this Doctrine, which will be wholly comprehended under theſe two heads,

Inſe-

Inferences of Truth } that are conſequent and
Rules of Duty } connatural thereto.

1. Inferences of Truth deducible from it.

1. *True Bleſſedneſs conſiſts not in any ſenſual enjoyment.* The bleſſedneſs of a man can be but *one*; *moſt only one*. He can have but one higheſt and beſt good. And its proper character is, that it finally ſatisfies and gives reſt to his ſpirit. This *the face and likeneſs of God doth*; his glory beheld and participated. Here then alone his full bleſſedneſs muſt be underſtood to lye. 1 *Infer.*

Therefore as this might many other ways be evinced to be *true*; ſo it evidently appears to be the proper iſſue of the *preſent truth*, and is plainly proved by it. But alas! it needs a great deal more to be *preſſed* than *proved*. O that it were but as much *conſidered* as it is *known*. The experience of almoſt Six thouſand years hath (one would think ſufficiently) teſtified the incompetency of every worldly thing to make men happy; that the preſent pleaſing of our ſenſes, and the gratification of our animal part, is not bleſſedneſs; that men are ſtill left unſatisfied notwithſtanding. But the practice and courſe of the world is ſuch, as if this were ſome late, and rare experiment; which (for curioſity) every one muſt be trying over again. Every age renews the enquiry after an earthly felicity; the deſign is intail'd (as the

the *Spanish* designs are said to be), and re-inforc'd with as great a confidence and vigor from age to age, as if none had been baffled, or defeated in it before; or that it were very likely to take at last. Had this been the alone folly of the *first age*, it had admitted some excuse, but that the world should still be cheated by the same so oft repeated impostures, presents us with a sad prospect of the deplorable state of mankind.
Psal. 49. *This their way is their folly, yet their posterity approve, &c.* The *wearied wits* and *wasted estates*, laid out upon the Philosophers Stone, afford but a faint defective representation of this case. What Chymistry can extract *heaven* out of a clod of clay? What art can make blessedness spring and grow out of this cold earth? If all created nature be vext and tortured never so long, who can expect this Elixir? Yet after so many frustrated attempts, so much time, and strength, and labour lost, men are still as eagerly and vainly busie as ever; are perpetually tossed by unsatisfied desires, *labouring in the fire*, wearying themselves for very vanity, distracted by the uncertain (and often contrary) motions of a ravenous appetite, and a blind mind, that would be happy, and knows not how. With what sounding bowels, with what compassionate tears should the state of mankind be lamented, by all that understand the worth of a Soul? What serious heart doth not melt and bleed for miserable men, that are (through a just

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Nemeſis *) ſo perpetually mockt with ſhadows, cheated with falſe deluſive appearances, infatuated and betrayed by their own ſenſes. They walk but in a vain ſhew, diſquieting themſelves in vain; their days flee away as a ſhadow, their ſtrength is only labour and ſorrow; while they riſe up early and lye down late, to ſeek reſt in trouble and life in death. They run away from bleſſedneſs while they pretend to purſue it, and ſuffer themſelves to be led down without regret to perdition, *as an ox to the ſlaughter, and a fool to the correction of the ſtocks, till a dart ſtrike through their liver:* Deſcend patiently to the chambers of death, not ſo much as once thinking, *whither are we going?* dream of nothing but an *earthly Paradiſe*, till they find themſelves amidſt *the infernal regions.*

* *Ira Dei eſt iſta vita mortalis, ubi homo vanitati ſimilis factus eſt, & dierum ejus velut umbra pertranſeunt, &c.* Aug. de Civ. Dei *l.* 22. *c.* 24.

2. *The Spirit of man (in as much as 'tis capable of ſuch a bleſſedneſs) appears an excellent creature.* Its natural capacity is ſuppoſed; for the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks of his own numerical perſon, the ſame that then writ; *I ſhall behold; ſhall be ſatisfied*; take away this ſuppoſition, and it could not be ſo ſaid; or, as (more whereof ſee under the next Inference) but there's an inclination, a certain *pondus naturæ* (as ſome Schoolmen ſpeak) by which it propends towards it; or there is the *radix*, or *fundamentum*, or *capacitas* (as ſome others) *i.e.* that it not only may *receive* it; but that it may be elevated by grace, *actively*, to concur, by its natural powers, as vital principles, towards the attainment of it, according to that known ſaying of Saint *Auguſtine*, *Poſſe credere naturæ eſt hominis*, &c.

2. *Inſer.* Not that this bleſſedneſs can be attained by meer human endeavours,

in *Job*'s words; *I ſhall behold him, and not another for me*; It would certainly be another, not the ſame. Judg hence the excellency of an human Soul (the principal ſubject of this bleſſedneſs) without addition of any new natural powers, 'tis capable of the viſion of God; of partaking unto ſatisfaction the divine likeneſs. And is not that an excellent creature, that is capable not only of ſurveying the creation of God, paſſing through the ſeveral ranks, and orders of created Beings; but of aſcending to the *Being of beings*, of contemplating the divine excellencies, of beholding the bright and glorious face of the bleſſed God himſelf; till it have lookt it ſelf into His very likeneſs, and have his intire image inwrought into it.

The dignity then of the Spirit of man is not to be eſtimated by the circumſtances of its preſent ſtate, as 'tis here clad with a ſordid fleſh, inwrapt in darkneſs, and grovelling in the duſt of the earth; but conſider the improveableneſs of its natural powers and faculties; the high perfections it may attain, and the foundations of how glorious a ſtate are laid in its very nature. And then who can tell, whether its *poſſible advancement* is more to be *admired*, or its *preſent calamity deplor'd*. Might this conſideration be permitted to ſettle, and fix it ſelf in the hearts of men; could any thing be ſo grievous to them, as their ſo vaſt diſtance from ſuch an attainable bleſſedneſs: or any thing be ſo induſtriouſly avoided, ſo earneſtly abhorred, as

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that viler dejection and abaſement of themſelves, when they are ſo low already by Divine diſpoſition, to deſcend lower by their own wickedneſs; when they are already fallen as low as Earth, to precipitate themſelves as low as Hell. How generous a diſdain ſhould *that thought* raiſe in mens ſpirits, of that vile ſervitude to which they have ſubjected themſelves, a ſervitude to brutal luſts, to ſenſual inclinations and deſires; as if the higheſt happineſs they did project to themſelves were the ſatisfaction of theſe! Would they not with an heroick ſcorn, *turn away their eyes from beholding vanity*, did they conſider their own *capacity* of beholding the divine glory? could they ſatisfie themſelves to become * *like the beaſts that periſh*, did they think of being ſatisfied with the *likeneſs of God*. And who can conceive unto what degree this aggravates the *ſin* of man, that he *ſo little minds* (as it will their *miſery, that ſhall fall ſhort of*) this bleſſedneſs! *They had ſpirits capable of it.* Conſider thou ſenſual man whoſe happineſs lies in *Colours*, and *Taſts*, and *Sounds* (as the Moraliſt ingeniouſly ſpeaks) that herd'ſt thy ſelf with brute creatures, and aimeſt no higher than they; as little lookeſt up, and art as much a ſtranger to the thoughts and deſires of Heaven; thy Creation did not ſet thee ſo low; *they* are where they were; but *thou*

* *Voluptas bonum pecoris eſt.*

Hunc tu (non dico inter viros ſed) inter homines numeras? cujus ſummum bonum ſaporibus, ac coloribus, ac ſonis conſtat? excedat ex hoc animalium numero pulcherrimo, ac diis ſecundo; mutis aggregetur animal pabulo natum. Sen. Ep. 92.

art fall'n from thy excellency. God did not make thee a brute Creature, but thou thy ſelf. Thou haſt yet a ſpirit about thee, that might underſtand its own originals, and alliance to the Father of Spirits; that hath a deſignation in its nature to higher converſes and employments. Many myriads of ſuch ſpirits, of no higher (original) excellency than thy own, are now in the preſence of the Higheſt Majeſty; are *prying* into the eternal glory, contemplating the perfections of the Divine Nature, beholding the unvailed face of God, which transfuſes upon them its own ſatisfying likeneſs. Thou art not ſo low-born, but thou might'ſt attain this ſtate alſo. That Soveraign Lord, and Author of all things, calls thee to it; his *goodneſs invites* thee, his *authority enjoins* thee to turn thy thoughts and deſigns this way. Fear not to be thought immodeſt or preſumptuous; * 'tis but a dutiful ambition; an obedient aſpiring. Thou art under a *Law* to be thus happy; nor doth it bind thee to any *natural impoſſibility*; it deſigns *inſtruction* to thee, not *deluſion*; *guidance*, not *mockery*. When thou art required to apply and turn thy Soul to this bleſſedneſs; 'tis not the ſame thing, as if thou wert bidden to remove a Mountain, to pluck down a Star, or create a World. Thou art here put upon nothing but what is agreeable to the primæval nature of man; and though it be to a vaſt heighth, thou muſt aſcend; 'tis by ſo eaſie and familiar Methods, by ſo apt Gradations, that thou

* *Hic Deos æquat, illò tendit, originis ſuæ memor. Nemo, improbè, id conatur aſtendere unde deſcenderat——ſocii eis ſumus & membra, &c.* Sen. Ep. 92.

thou wilt be ſenſible of no violence done to thy nature in all thy way. Do but make ſome trials with thy ſelf; thou wilt ſoon find, *nothing is thy hindrance but an unwilling heart.* Try however (which will ſuffice to let thee diſcern thy own capacity, and will be a likely means to make thee willing) how far thou canſt underſtand and trace the way (complying with it at leaſt as reaſonable) that leads to this bleſſedneſs. Retire a little into thy ſelf; forget a while thy relation to this ſenſible world; ſummon in thy ſelf-reflecting and conſidering powers: Thou wilt preſently perceive thou art not already happy, thou art in ſome part unſatisfied; and thence will eaſily underſtand, in as much as thou art not happy in thy ſelf, that it muſt be ſomething, as yet without thee, muſt make thee ſo; and nothing can make thee happy, but what is in that repect better than thy ſelf; or hath ſome perfection in it, which thou findeſt wanting to thy ſelf. A little further diſcourſe or reaſoning with thy ſelf, will eaſily perſwade thee, thou haſt ſomething better about thee than that luggage of fleſh thou goeſt with to and fro; for thou well knoweſt, *that* * is not capable of reaſon and diſcourſe; and that the power of doing ſo is an higher perfection than any

* Λέγισμος δὲ καὶ νοῦς, οὐκέτι ταῦτα σώματι δίδωσιν ἀυτὰ καὶ γὰρ τὸ ἔργον ἀυτῶν οὐ δι' ὀργάνων τελεῖται τοῦ σώματος ἐμπέδιον γὰρ τοῦτο. εἴτις ἀυτῶν ἐν ταῖς σκέψεσι προχρῶτο. *Plotin. Ennead.* 4. *lib.* 3.

thou canſt entitle *it* to; and that therefore, beſides thy bulkie material part, thou muſt have ſuch a thing as a *ſpirit* or *ſoul* belonging to thee; to which, *that*, and thy *other perfections* (not competible to groſs matter) may agree. Thou wilt readily aſſent; that thou canſt never be happy, while thy better and more noble part is unſatisfied; and that it can only be ſatisfied with ſomething ſutable and connatural to it. That therefore thy happineſs muſt lie in ſomething more excellent than this material or ſenſible world, otherwiſe it cannot be grateful and ſutable to thy Soul, yea in ſomething that may be better, and more excellent than thy Soul it ſelf, otherwiſe how can it *better* and *perfect* that *. As thou canſt not but acknowledg thy Soul to be ſpiritual and immaterial, ſo if thou attend, thou wilt ſoon ſee cauſe to acknowledg a ſpiritual or immaterial being better and more perfect than thy own Soul. For *its* perfections were not *ſelf-originate*, they were therefore *derived* from ſomething, for that reaſon, confeſſedly, more excellent, whence at laſt alſo thou wilt find it unavoidably impos'd upon thee, to apprehend and adore *a being abſolutely perfect*; and than which there cannot be a more perfect; the firſt ſubject, and common fountain of all perfections, which hath them *underived*

* *Sicut non eſt à carne, ſed ſuper carnem, quod carnem facit vivere: ſic non eſt ab homine, ſed ſuper hominem quod hominem facit beatè vivere.* D. Aug. de Civit. Dei lib. 19. c. 25.

underived in himſelf, and can *derive* them unto inferiour created beings *. Upon this *eternal* and *ſelf-eſſentiate being*, the *infinitely bleſſed God*, thou neceſſarily dependeſt, and oweſt therefore, conſtant ſubjection and obedience to him. Thou haſt indeed offended

* *ut in æternum causam efficientem, ita & in gradum virtutis & perfectionis, non datur progreſſus in infinitum: ſed oportet ſit aliqua prima & ſumma perfectio.* Pet. Molin. de cognitione Dei. Not to inſiſt upon what hath been much urged by learned men of former and latter (yea and of the preſent) time, [that whoſoever denies the exiſtence of *an abſolutely perfect being*, contradicts himſelf in the denial, inaſmuch as *necessity of exiſtence* is included in the very ſubject of the negation] ſome accounting it a Sophiſm, and it being unſeaſonable here to diſcuſs it.

him; and art thereby cut off from all intereſt in him, and intercourſe with him; but he hath proclaimed in his Goſpel, his willingneſs to be reconciled, and that, through the ſufferings, righteouſneſs, and interceſſion of his only begotten Son, thy merciful Redeemer, the way is open for thy reſtitution and recovery; that thou may'ſt partake from him what ever perfection is wanting to thy bleſſedneſs. Nothing is required from thee in order hereunto, but that relying on, and ſubmitting to thy Redeemers gracious conduct, thou turn thy mind and heart towards thy God, *to know him*, and *conform* to him; to view and imitate the Divine perfections; the faithful endeavour and inchoation whereof, will have this iſſue and reward, the clear viſion and full participation of them. So that thy *way* and *work* differ not, in nature and

kind, from thy *end* and *reward*; thy *duty* from thy *bleſſedneſs*. Nor are either repugnant to the natural conſtitution of thy own Soul. What violence is there done to reaſonable nature in all this? or what can hinder thee herein, but a moſt culpably averſe and wicked heart. Did thy *reaſon* ever turn off thy Soul from God? was it not thy *corruption* only? What vile images doſt thou receive from earthly objects, which deform thy Soul, while thou induſtriouſly averteth thy Makers likeneſs that would perfect it? How full is thy mind and heart of vanity? how empty of God? Were this through natural incapacity, thou wert an innocent creature; it were thy *infelicity* (negative I mean) not thy *crime*; and muſt be reſolved into the *Soveraign will of thy Creator*, not *thy own diſobedient will*. But when this ſhall appear, the true ſtate of thy caſe, and thou ſhalt hear it from the mouth of thy Judg; "Thou "didſt not like to retain me in thy knowledg "or love; thou hadſt reaſon and will to uſe "about meaner objects, but none for me; "thou couldſt ſometimes have ſpared me a "glance, a caſt of thine eye at leaſt, when "thou didſt rather chuſe it ſhould be in the "ends of the earth: A thought of me had "coſt thee as little, might as ſoon have been "thought, as of this or that vanity; but thy "heart was not with me. I baniſh thee, "therefore, that preſence which thou never "loved'ſt. I deny thee the viſion thou didſt "always ſhun, and the impreſſions of my

"likeneſs

"likeneſs which thou didſt ever hate. I eter-
"nally abandon thee to the darkneſs and de-
"formities which were ever grateful to thee.
"Thine is *a ſelf-created hell*; the fruit of thy
"own choice; no invitations or perſwaſi-
"ons of mine could keep thee from it. How
wilt thou *excuſe thy fault*, or *avert thy doom!*
what Arguments or Apologies ſhall *defend*
thy cauſe againſt theſe pleadings. Nay what
Armour ſhall *defend thy Soul* againſt its own
wounding ſelf-reflections hereupon? When
every Thought ſhall be a Dart; and a con-
victed Conſcience an ever gnawing Worm,
a fiery Serpent with endleſs involutions e-
ver winding about thy heart?

It will now be ſadly thought on, how of-
ten thou ſaw'ſt thy way and declin'dſt it,
knew'ſt thy duty and did'ſt wave it; un-
derſtood'ſt thy intereſt and did'ſt ſlight it;
approv'dſt the things that were more excel-
lent and did'ſt reject them. How often thou
did'ſt prevaricate with thy light, and run
counter to thine own eyes; while things,
confeſſedly, moſt worthy of thy thoughts and
purſuits were overlook't; and empty ſha-
dows eagerly purſu'd. Thy own heart will
now feelingly tell thee, it was not want of
capacity, but *inclination* that cut thee off from
bleſſedneſs. Thou wilt now bethink thy ſelf,
that *when life and immortality were brought*
to light before thy eyes in the Goſpel; and thou
waſt told of this future bleſſedneſs of the
Saints, and *preſt to follow holineſs, as without*
which thou couldſt not ſee God; it was a *rea-*
ſonable

ſonable man was ſpoken to, that had a power to *underſtand*, and *judg*, and *chuſe*; not a *Stone* or a *Brute*, Thy *capacity* of this bleſſedneſs makes thee capable alſo of the moſt exquiſite torments; and, reflected on, actually infers it. How paſſionately (but vainly) wilt thou then cry out, "O that I had "fill'd up the place of any the meaneſt Crea- "ture throughout the whole Creation of "God, that I had been a Gnat, or a Fly, "or had never been, rather than to have ſo "noble abuſed *powers* eternally to reckon for! Yea and thou muſt reckon for not only the actual light, and good impreſſions thou had'ſt, but even all thou waſt capable of, and might'ſt have attained. Thou ſhalt now recount with anguiſh and horror (and rend thy own Soul with the thoughts) what thou mighteſt now have been; how excellent and glorious a creature! hadſt thou not contriv'd thy own miſery, and conſpir'd with the Devil againſt thy ſelf, how to deform and deſtroy thy own Soul. While this remembrance ſhall always afreſh return, that nothing was enjoined thee as a duty, or propounded as thy bleſſedneſs, but what thou waſt made capable of; and that it was not *fatal neceſſity*, but a *wilful choice* made thee miſerable.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Inference 3. *That a change of heart is neceſſary to this bleſſedneſs. The pretences of ungodly men, whereby they would avoid the neceſſity of this change. Five conſiderations propoſed in order to the detecting the vanity of ſuch pretences. A particular diſcuſſion and refutation of thoſe pretences.*

3. *'TIS a mighty change muſt paſs upon the Souls of men in order to their enjoyment of this Bleſſedneſs.* This equally follows from the conſideration of the nature and ſubſtantial parts of it, as of the *qualifying righteouſneſs* pre-required to it. A little reflection upon the common ſtate and temper of mens ſpirits, will ſoon inforce an acknowledgment that the Viſion of God, and conformity to him, are things above their reach, and which they are never likely to take ſatisfaction in, or at all to favour; till they become otherwiſe diſpoſed than before the renovating change they are. The Text *expreſſes* no more in ſtating the qualified ſubject of this *bleſſedneſs* [*in righteouſneſs*] than it evidently *implies* in the account it gives of 3 Infer.

of this *bleſſedneſs* it ſelf, that it lies [*in ſeeing God, and being ſatisfied with his likeneſs*]. Aſſoon as it is conſidered, that the bleſſedneſs of Souls is ſtated here, what can be a more obvious reflection than this; Lord, then how great a change muſt they undergo! what, ſuch Souls be bleſſed in ſeeing and partaking the Divine likeneſs, that never loved it! were ſo much his enemies! 'Tis true they are *naturally capable* of it, which ſpeaks their original excellency; but they are *morally uncapable*, i.e. *indiſpoſed* and *averſe*, which as truly, and moſt ſadly, ſpeaks their preſent vileneſs; and the ſordid, abject temper they now are of. They are deſtitute of no *natural powers* neceſſary to the attainment of this bleſſedneſs; but in the mean time have them ſo depraved, by impure and vitious tinctures, that they cannot reliſh it, or the means to it. They have reaſonable Souls, furniſhed with intellective and elective faculties; but labouring under a manifold diſtemper and diſaffection; that they *cannot receive*, they *cannot ſavour* the things of God, or what is Spiritual. They want the εὐθετία (as we may expreſs it), the well-diſpoſedneſs for the Kingdom of God, intimated *Luk.* 9.62. the ἱκανότης, the meetneſs, the aptitude, or idoneity for the inheritance of the Saints in light, *Col.* 1.12.

Capax eſt noſter animus, perfertur illo, ſi vitia non deprimant. Sen. Epiſt. 92.

1 Cor. 2. 14.

Rom. 8. 5.

A ſettled averſion from God hath faſtned its roots in the very ſpirit of their minds (for that is ſtated as the prime ſubject of the change to be made) and how can they take

Eph. 4. 23.

pleaſure

pleaſure then in the viſion and participation of his glory? whereas, by beholding the glory of the Lord, they ſhould be changed into the ſame image; a vail is upon the heart till it turn to the Lord, as was ſaid concerning the Jews, 2 *Cor.* 3. *The God of this world hath blinded their minds, leſt* (that transforming light) *the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them,* *Chap.* 4. 4. *They are alienated from the Life of* Eph. 4. 18. *God, through their ignorance and blindneſs of heart.* The life they chuſe is to be ἄθεοι ἐν κόσμῳ, Atheiſts, or *without God in the world.* Ch. 2. 12. *They like not to retain God in their knowledg:* Rom. 1. 28. *are willingly ignorant of him.* Say to him, 2 Pet. 3. *depart from us, we deſire not the knowledg of* Job 21. 14. *thy ways. The Lord looks down from heaven* Pſal. 53. *upon the children of men, to ſee if any will underſtand, if any will ſeek after God*; and the reſult of the enquiry is, *There is none that doth good, no not one.* They are *haters of* Joh. 15. *God*, as our Saviour accuſed the Jews, and Saint *Paul* the Gentiles, *Are lovers of pleaſure* Rom. 1. *more than lovers of God.* Their underſtandings are dark, their minds vain, their wills obſtinate, their conſciences ſeared, their hearts hard and dead, their lives one continued Rebellion againſt God and a defiance to heaven. At how vaſt diſtance are ſuch Souls from ſuch bleſſedneſs! The notion and nature of bleſſedneſs muſt ſure be changed, or the temper of their Spirits. Either they muſt have new hearts created, or a new Heaven, if ever they be happy. And ſuch is the ſtupid dotage

tage of vain man, he can more eaſily perſwade himſelf to believe, that the Sun it ſelf ſhould be transformed into a dunghil, that the Holy God ſhould lay aſide his Nature, and turn Heaven into a place of impure darkneſs; than that *he himſelf* ſhould need to undergo a change. O the powerful infatuation of *ſelf-love*, that men in the *gall of bitterneſs* ſhould think 'tis well with their ſpirits, and fancy themſelves in a caſe good enough, to enjoy Divine pleaſures; that (as the Toads venom offends not it ſelf) their loathſom wickedneſs, which all good men deteſt, is a pleaſure to them; and while 'tis as the poiſon of Aſps under their lips, they roll it as a dainty bit, revolve it in their thoughts with delight. Their wickedneſs
Pſal. 36. 1, 2. ſpeaks it ſelf out to the very hearts of *others*, while it never affects their *own*; and is found out to be hateful while they ſtill continue flattering themſelves. And becauſe they are without ſpot *in their own eyes*; they adventure ſo high, as to preſume themſelves ſo in the pure eyes of God too; and inſtead of deſigning to be *like God*, they already imagine him *ſuch a one as themſelves*. Hence their
Pſal. 50. allotment of time (in the whole of it, the Lord knows, little enough) for the working out of their ſalvation, ſpends apace; while they do not ſo much as underſtand their buſineſs. Their *meaſured hour is* almoſt out; an *immenſe Eternity* is coming on upon them; and lo they ſtand as men that cannot find their hands. Urge them to the ſpeedy ſerious endeavour

deavour of an *heart-change*, earneſtly to intend the buſineſs of regeneration, of becoming new creatures; they ſeem to underſtand it as little, as if they were ſpoken to in an unknown tongue; and are in the like poſture with the confounded builders of *Babel*, they know not what we mean, or would put them upon. They wonder what we would have them do. "They are (ſay they) "*Orthodox* Chriſtians: They believe all the "Articles of the Chriſtian Creed: They deteſt "all Hereſie and falſe Doctrine: They are no "ſtrangers to the Houſe of God; but dili-"gently attend the enjoined Solemnities of "Publick Worſhip: Some poſſibly can ſay, "they are ſober, juſt, charitable, peaceable; "and others that can boaſt leſs of their Ver-"tues, yet ſay, they are ſorry for their ſins, "and pray God to forgive them. And if we urge them concerning their Tranſlation from the ſtate of Nature to that of Grace, their becoming new creatures, their implantation into Chriſt: "They ſay they have "been Baptized, and therein regenerate, and "what would we have more?

But to how little purpoſe is it to equivocate with God? to go about to put a fallacy upon the Judg of Spirits? or eſcape the animadverſion of his fiery flaming eye? or elude his determinations, and pervert the true intent and meaning of his moſt eſtabliſhed Conſtitutions and Laws.

Dareſt thou venture thy Soul upon it? that this is all God means, by *having a new*

Pſal. 51. *new heart created, a right ſpirit renewed in us:*
Eph. 2. 10. by being made Gods *workmanſhip, created in*
2 Cor. 5. *Chriſt Jeſus unto good works:* by *becoming*
17. *new creatures, old things being done away, all*
Eph. 4. 23, *things made new:* by *ſo learning the truth as*
24. *it is in Jeſus, to the putting off the old man---- and putting on the new; which after God is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs;* by
Jam. 1. 18. *being begotten of Gods own will by the word of truth;* to be (the ἀπαρχὴ) the chief excellency, the prime glory (as certainly his new creature is his beſt creature), the firſt fruits, or *the devoted part* of all his creatures; by
Gal. 4. 19. *having Chriſt formed in us;* by *partaking the*
2 Pet. 1. 4. *divine nature*, the *incorruptible ſeed*, the *ſeed*
1 Pet. 1. *of God;* by being *born of God, Spirit of Spi-*
Joh. 3. 6. *rit;* as of earthly Parents we are *born fleſh of fleſh.* When my eternal bleſſedneſs lies upon it, had I not need to be ſure, that I hit the true meaning of theſe Scriptures? eſpecially, that at leaſt I fall not below it, and reſt not in any thing ſhort of what Scripture makes indiſpenſably neceſſary to my entring into the Kingdom of God?

I profeſſedly wave controverſies; and 'tis pity ſo practical a buſineſs, as this I am now upon, and upon which Salvation ſo much depends, ſhould ever have been encumbred with any controverſie. And therefore (though I ſhall not digreſs ſo far, as to undertake a *particular* and *diſtinct* handling, here, of this work of God upon the Soul, yet) I ſhall propound ſomething in general, touching the *change* neceſſarily previous to this bleſſedneſs,

ſedneſs, (wherein that neceſſity is evidenceable from the nature of this bleſſedneſs which is the buſineſs I have in hand) that, I hope, will paſs among Chriſtians for acknowledged truth, not liable to diſpute, though the Lord knows it be little conſidered. My deſign being rather to awaken Souls to the conſideration of *known* and *agreed* things than to perplex them about *unknown*. Conſider therefore:

1. First, *That the holy Scriptures, in the foremention'd and other like paſſages, do plainly hold forth the neceſſity of a* real change *to be made in the inward temper and diſpoſitions of the Soul; and not a* relative only, *reſpecting its ſtate.* This cannot be doubted by any that acknowledg a *real inherent depravation*, propagated in the nature of man. No, nor denied by them that grant ſuch a corruption to be general and continued among men; whether by imitation only, or what way ſoever. And willing I am, to meet men upon their own principles and conceſſions, however erroneous, or ſhort of the truth they may be, while they are yet improvable to their own advantage. Admit, that *regeneration*, or the *new birth*, includes *a change of our relation and ſtate God-ward*; doth it therefore *exclude* an intrinſick ſubjective change of the inclinations and tendencies of the Soul? And if it did, yet other terms are more peculiarly appropriate to, and moſt expreſly point out *this very change alone*; As that of *converſion*, or of *turning to God*; of *being re-*

newed in the ſpirit of the mind; of *putting off the old man that is corrupt by* &c. and *putting on the new man, which is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs*, &c. of *partaking the divine nature*; It matters not if this or that expreſſion be underſtood by ſome, more principally in another ſenſe, the *thing it ſelf*, of which we ſpeak, is as clearly expreſſed, and as urgently preſſed (as there was cauſe) as any other matter whatſoever throughout the whole Book of God. But men are ſlower of belief, as to this great Article of the Chriſtian Doctrine, than to moſt (I might ſay *any*) other. This Truth more directly aſſaults the ſtrong holds of the Devil in the hearts of men; and is of more immediate tendency to ſubvert his Kingdom; Therefore they are moſt unwilling to have it *true*, and moſt hardly believe it. Here they are ſo madly bold, as to give the lie to all Divine Revelations; and though they are never ſo plainly told *without holineſs none ſhall ſee God*, they will yet maintain the contrary belief and hope, till, *go ye curſed*, vindicate the Truth of God, and the flames of Hell be their eternal confutation. Lord! that ſo plain a thing will not enter into the hearts of men; that ſo urgent inculcations will not yet make them apprehend, that their Souls muſt be renewed, or periſh! That they will ſtill go dreaming on with that mad conceit, that (whatever the Word of God ſays to the contrary) they may yet with unſanctified hearts get to Heaven! How deplorable

is the caſe, when men have no other hope left them, but that the God of truth will prove falſe and bely his word; yea, and overturn the nature of things, to ſave them in their ſins! Thou that liveſt under the Goſpel, haſt thou any pretence for thy (ſeeming) ignorance in this matter? couldſt thou ever look one quarter of an hour into the Bible, and not meet with ſome intimation of this truth? What was the ground of thy miſtake? What hath beguiled thee into ſo miſchievous a deluſion? How could ſuch an imagination have place in thy Soul, That a Child of Wrath *by nature*, could become a Child of God without *receiving a new nature?* That ſo vaſt a change could be made in thy ſtate, without any at all in the temper of thy ſpirit.

Secondly, Conſider, *That this change is, in its own nature, and the deſign of God who works it, diſpoſitive of the Soul for Bleſſedneſs.* 2.

'Tis ſufficiently evident from the conſideration of the ſtate it ſelf, of the unrenewed Soul, that a change is neceſſary for this end; ſuch a Soul in which it is not wrought, when once its drowſie ſtupifying ſlumber is ſhaken off, and its reflecting power awakened, muſt needs be a perpetual torment to it ſelf. So far it is remov'd from bleſſedneſs, it is its own Hell; and can fly from miſery and death no faſter than from it ſelf. Bleſſedneſs compoſes the Soul, reduces it to a conſiſtency; it infers (or rather is) a ſelf-ſatisfaction, a well-pleaſedneſs and content-

ment with ones ſelf, inrich't and fill'd with the divine fulneſs. Hence 'tis *at reſt*, not as being pent in, but contentedly dwelling with it ſelf, and keeping within its own bounds of its own accord. The unrenewed Soul can no more contain it ſelf within its own terms or limits, is as little ſelf-conſiſtent, as a raging flame, or an impetuous tempeſt. Indeed its own luſts perpetually (as ſo many Vultures) rend and tear it; and the more when they want external objects; then (as hunger) their fury is all turned inward; and they prey upon inteſtines; upon their own ſubject; but unto *endleſs torment*, not *ſatisfaction*. In what poſture is this Soul for reſt and bleſſedneſs.

ἀνάπαυσις.

The *nature of this change* ſufficiently ſpeaks its own deſign. 'Tis an introduction of (the *primordia*) the very principles of bleſſedneſs.

And Scripture as plainly ſpeaks the deſign of God: He *regenerates to the undefiled inheritance: makes meet for it: works*, forms, or faſhions the Soul *unto that ſelf-ſame thing*, viz. *to deſire and groan after that bleſſed ſtate*; and conſequently, to acquieſce and reſt therein. Therefore, vain man, that dreameſt of being happy without undergoing ſuch a change; how art thou trying thy skill to abſtract a thing from it ſelf; for the prerequired righteouſneſs whereunto thou muſt be changed, and this bleſſedneſs, are in *kind* and *nature* the ſame thing, as much as a *child* and a *man*. Thou pretendeſt thou would'ſt

1 Pet. 1. 3, 4. Col. 1. 12. 2 Cor. 5. 5.

would'ſt have that perfected, which thou canſt not endure ſhould ever be begun: Thou ſetteſt thy ſelf to prevent and ſuppreſs what, in its own nature, and by Divine Ordination, tends to the accompliſhment of thy own pretended deſires. Thou wouldſt have the Tree without ever admitting the Seed or Plant: Thou wouldſt have *heat*, and canſt not endure the leaſt *warmth*; ſo beſotted a thing is a carnal heart!

Thirdly, *That in as much as this bleſſedneſs conſiſts in the ſatisfactory ſight and participation of Gods own likeneſs, unto whom the Soul is habitually averſe, This change muſt chiefly ſtand in its becoming* holy *or* godly, *or in the alteration of its diſpoſitions and inclinations as to God.* Otherwiſe the deſign and end of it is not attained. We are required to *follow peace with all men* (but here the accent is put) *and holineſs, without which no man ſhall ſee God, Heb.* 12.14. 'Tis therefore a vain thing, in reference to what we have now under conſideration, *viz. the poſſibility of attaining this bleſſedneſs*, to ſpeak of any other changes that fall ſhort of, or are of another kind from the right diſpoſition of heart Godward. This *change* we are now conſidering, is no other than the proper adequate impreſs of the Goſpel-diſcovery upon mens ſpirits, as we have largely ſhewn the righteouſneſs is, in which it terminates. The ſum of that diſcovery is, [*That God is in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf*] the proper impreſs of it, therefore is the *actual* 3. 2 Cor. 5. 18, 19.

reconciliation of the Soul to God through Chriſt, a friendly well affected poſture of ſpirit *towards God, our laſt end and higheſt good; and towards Chriſt, our only way* (ſince the Apoſtacy) *of attaining and enjoying it.* To reſt therefore in any other good diſpoſitions or endowments of mind, is as much beſides the buſineſs, as impertinent to the preſent purpoſe, as if one deſign'd to the *Government of a City*, ſhould ſatisfie himſelf that he hath the skill *to Play well on a Lute*; or he that intends *Phyſick*, that he is well ſeen in *Architecture*. The general ſcope and tenor of the Goſpel tells thee, O man, plainly enough, what the buſineſs is thou muſt intend (if thou wilfully overlook it not) in order to thy bleſſedneſs. 'Tis written to
1 Joh. 1. 1, draw thee into *fellowſhip with the Father and*
2, 3, 4. *the Son, that thy joy may be full.* It aims at the bringing of thee into a ſtate of bleſſedneſs *in God through Chriſt*; and is therefore the inſtrument by which God would form thy heart thereto. The *Seal* by which to make the firſt Impreſſion of *his Image* upon thee. Which will then as ſteadily incline and determine thy Soul towards him; as the magnetick touch aſcertains the poſture of the Needle. Wherefore doth he *there* diſcover his own heart; but to melt, and win, and transform thine? The *word of grace* is the *ſeed* of the new Creature. *Through the exceeding great and precious promiſes, he makes Souls partake of the divine nature. Grace is, firſtly, reveal'd to teach the denial of ungodlineſs,*

lineſs, &c. Turn thy thoughts hither then, and conſider what is there done upon thy Soul by the Goſpel, to attemper and conform it to God? Wherein has thy heart anſwered this its viſible deſign and intendment? Thou art but in a delirious dream till thou ſeriouſly bethinkeſt thy ſelf of this. For otherwiſe, how can the averſion of thy heart from him eſcape thy daily obſervation; thou canſt not be without evidences of it; what pleaſure doſt thou take in retiring thy ſelf with God? what care to redeem time *only* for converſe with him? had'ſt thou not rather be any where elſe? In a time of vacancy from buſineſs and company, when thou haſt ſo great a variety of things before thee, among which to chuſe an object for thy thoughts, Do they not naturally fall upon any thing rather than God! Nor do thou think to ſhift off this by aſſigning the *meer natural cauſe*; for if there were not ſomewhat more in the matter, why is it not ſo with all? He upon whom this change had paſſed could ſay; *My ſoul ſhall be ſatisfied as with marrow and fatneſs; and my mouth ſhall praiſe thee with joyful lips, when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.* Pſal. 63. 5, 6. *My meditations of him ſhall be ſweet; I will be glad in the Lord.* Pſal. 104. 34. *How precious are thy thoughts unto me. O God, how great is the ſum of them? If I ſhould count them, they are more in number than the ſand; when I awake, I am ſtill with thee.* Pſal. 139. 17, 18. *Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O God, have we waited for thee;* Iſa. 26. 8, 9.

the deſire of our ſoul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my ſoul have I deſired thee in the night, yea with my ſpirit within me will I ſeek thee early, &c. Therefore plain it is, there is *a ſinful diſtemper* to be wrought out, an *ungodly diſpoſition of heart*, which it concerns thee, not to reſt till thou ſee removed.

4. Fourthly, Conſider, *That to become godly, or this change of inclinations and diſpoſitions towards God, is that which of all other the Soul doth moſt ſtrongly reluctate and ſtrive againſt; and which therefore it undergoes with greateſt difficulty and regret.* 'Tis an horrid and amazing thing it ſhould be ſo, but Scripture and Experience leave it undoubted that ſo it is. What, that the higheſt Excellency, the moſt perfect Beauty, Lovelineſs, and Love it ſelf ſhould ſo little attract a reaſonable ſpiritual being that iſſued thence? His own off-ſpring ſo unkind! what more than monſtrous unnaturalneſs is this, ſo to diſaffect ones own Original! 'Twere eaſie to accumulate and heap up conſiderations that would render this aſtoniſhingly ſtrange. So things are reckon'd upon ſeveral accounts, either as they are more rare and unfrequent (which is the vulgar way of eſtimating wonders), or as their cauſes are of more difficult inveſtigation; or (if they are moral wonders) as they are more unreaſonable or cauſleſs; upon this
Mar. 6. 6. laſt account, *Chriſt marvelled at the Jews unbelief*; And ſo is this hatred juſtly marvel-
Joh. 15. 25 lous; as being *altogether without a cauſe?*

But

But thence to infer, there is no ſuch thing, were to diſpute againſt the Sun. No truth hath more of *light and evidence in it*, though none more of *terror and prodigie*. To how many thouſand objects is the mind of man indifferent? can turn its ſelf to this or that; run with facility all points of the Compaſs, among the whole Univerſe of Beings: But aſſay only to draw it to God, and it recoils; thoughts and affections revolt, and decline all converſe with that bleſſed object! Toward other objects, it freely opens and dilates it ſelf, as under the benign beams of a warm Sun; there are placid complacential emotions; amicable ſprightly converſes and embraces. Towards God only, it is preſently contracted and ſhut up; Life retires, and it becomes as a Stone, cold, rigid, and impenetrable: The quite contrary to what is required (which alſo thoſe very precepts do plainly imply); 'tis alive to ſin, to the world, Rom. 6. 11 to vanity; but crucified, mortified, dead to God and Jeſus Chriſt.

The natures of many men that are harſh, fierce, and ſavage, admit of many cultivations and refinings; and by moral precept, the exerciſe and improvement of reaſon, with a ſevere animadverſion and obſervance of themſelves, they become mild, tractable, gentle, meek. (The ſtory of the *Phyſiognamiſts* gueſs at the temper of *Socrates* is known) but of all other, the diſaffected Soul is leaſt inclinable ever to become *good natur'd* towards God, wherein grace or holineſs doth conſiſt.

conſiſt. Here 'tis moſt unperſwadable, never facile to this change. One would have thought, no affection ſhould have been ſo natural, ſo deeply inwrought into the ſpirit of man, as an affection towards the Father of Spirits; but *here* he moſt of all diſcovers himſelf to be without *natural affection*, ſurely here is a ſad proof, that ſuch affection doth not aſcend.

The whole duty of man, as *to the principle of it*, reſolves into *love. That is the fulfilling of the Law.* As to its *object*, the two Tables divide it between God and our Neighbour. And accordingly divide that love. Upon thoſe two Branches whereof; *love to God*, and *love to our neighbour*, hang all the Law and the Prophets.

The wickedneſs of the world hath kill'd this love at the very root, and indiſpoſed the nature of man to all exerciſes of it, either way, whether towards God or his Neighbour. It hath not only rendred man unmeet for *holy communion with God*, but in a great meaſure for *civil ſociety with one another.* It hath deſtroyed good nature; made men falſe, envious, barbarous; turn'd the world (eſpecially the dark places of the earth, where the light of the Goſpel ſhines not) into habitations of cruelty. But who ſees not the enmity and diſaffection of mens hearts towards God is the more deeply rooted, and leſs ſuperable evil?

The beloved Apoſtle gives us a plain and ſad intimation how the caſe is, as to this, when

when he reaſons thus; *He that loveth not his brother whom he hath ſeen, how can he love God whom he hath not ſeen?*

He argues from the leſs to the greater; and this is the ground upon which his argument is built; *That the loving of God is a matter of greater difficulty, and from which the ſpirit of man is more remote, than the loving of his neighbour.* And he withall inſinuates an account why it is ſo; Gods remoteneſs from our ſenſe; which is indeed a *cauſe*, but no *excuſe*: It is a peccant faulty cauſe. For is our ſo groſs ſenſuality no ſin? that nothing ſhould affect our hearts but what we can ſee with our eyes? as if our *ſenſe* were the only meaſure or judg of excellencies. We are not all fleſh, what have we done with our Souls? if we cannot ſee God with our eyes, why do we not with our minds? at leaſt ſo much of him we might, as to diſcern his excellency above all things elſe. How come our Souls to loſe their dominion, and to be ſo ſlaviſhly ſubject to a ruling ſenſe? But the reaſon leſs concerns our preſent purpoſe; that whereof it is the reaſon; that implied aſſertion, *that men are in a leſs diſpoſition to the love of God than their neighbour*, is the ſad truth we are now conſidering. There are certain homilitical virtues that much adorn and poliſh the nature of man, Urbanity, Fidelity, Juſtice, Patience of Injuries, Compaſſion towards the Miſerable, &c. and indeed without theſe, the world would break up, and all civil ſocieties diſband; if at leaſt they

they did not in ſome degree obtain. But in the mean time men are at the greateſt diſtance imaginable from any diſpoſition to ſociety with God. They have *ſome love* for one another; but *none* for him. And yet it muſt be remembred, that love to our neighbour, and all the conſequent exertions of it, becoming duty by the Divine Law, ought to be performed as acts of obedience to God, and therefore ought to grow from the ſtock and root of a Divine Love; I mean *love to God.* They are otherwiſe but Spurious Vertues, Baſtard Fruits (*men gather not Grapes of Thorns, &c.*), they grow from a Tree of another *kind*; and what ever ſemblance they may have of the true, they want their conſtituent form, their life and ſoul. Though 1 Joh. 3. 14. *love to the brethren* is made a character of the regenerate ſtate, of *having paſt from death to life*; 'tis yet but a more *remote*, and is it ſelf brought to trial by this *higher* and more *immediate one*, and which is more intimately connatural to the new creature, even the Chap. 5. 2. *Love of God*; *By this we know we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his Commandments.* A *reſpect to God* * ſpecifies every Vertue and Duty. What ever is loved and ſerved, and not in him and for him (*ſervato ordine finis*, as the School-phraſe is) becomes an Idol; and that love and ſervice is Idolatry. And what a diſcovery is here of

* *Proinde virtutes quas ſibi videntur habere, niſi ad Deum referantur, etiam ipſa vitia ſunt potiùs quàm virtutes.* Aug. de Civit. Dei l. 19. c. 25.

diſaffection

diſaffection to God; that in the exerciſe of ſuch (the above-mentioned) vertues, one ſingle act ſhall be torn from it ſelf, from its ſpecifying moral form, only to leave out *him*. A promiſe ſhall be kept, but without any reſpect to God—(for even the promiſes made *to him* are broken without any ſcruple). That which is *anothers* ſhall be rendred to him; but God ſhall not be regarded in the buſineſs. An alms given, *for the Lords ſake*, left out. That which concerns my neighbour *often done*, but what concerns God therein, as it were *ſtudiouſly omitted*. This is what he that runs may read, That though the hearts of men are not to one another as they ſhould, they are much more *averſe* towards God.

Men are eaſier of acquaintance towards one another, they ſlide inſenſibly into each others boſomes; even the moſt churliſh moroſe natures are wrought upon by aſſiduous repeated kindneſſes (*gutta cavat lapidem*, &c.), as often falling drops at length wear and work into very ſtones: Towards God their hearts are more impenetrable than Rocks, harder than Adamants. He is ſeeking with ſome an acquaintaince all their days: They live their whole age under the Goſpel, and yet are never won. They hearken to one another, but are utterly unperſwadable towards God; as the *deaf Adder that hears not the voice of the Charmer, though charming never ſo wiſely*. The cleareſt Reaſon, the moſt powerful Arguments move them not; no

nor

nor the moſt inſinuative allurements, the ſweeteſt breathings of love: *How often would I have gathered thee, as the Hen her Chickens under her wings, and ye would not. God draws with the cords of a man, with the bands of love; but they ſtill perverſly keep at an unkind diſtance.*

Mat.23.37 See Pſal. 81.8, to 13 Prov.1. 20 to 24, &c. Hoſ.11.4.

Men uſe to believe one another (were there no credit given to each others words, and ſome mutual confidence in one another, there could be no human converſe, all muſt affect ſolitude, and dwell in Dens and Deſarts as wild beaſts), but how incredulous are they of all Divine Revelations? though teſtified with never ſo convincing evidence. *Who hath believed our report!* The word of the eternal God is regarded (O amazing wickedneſs) as we would the word of a Child or a Fool: No ſober rational man, but his Narrations, Promiſes, or Threatnings are more reckon'd of.

Men are more reconcilable to one another when enemies, more conſtant when friends. How often doth the *power* of a conquering enemy, and the *diſtreſs* of the conquered, work a ſubmiſſion on this part, and a remiſſion on that. How often are haughty ſpirits ſtoopt, by a ſeries of calamities, and made ductile; proud *arrogants* formed, by neceſſity and miſery, into humble *ſupplicants*, ſo as to lie proſtrate at the feet of a man that may help or hurt them; while ſtill the ſame perſons retain indomitable unyeilding ſpirits towards God, under their moſt afflictive

ctive preſſures. Though his gracious Nature and infinite fulneſs promiſe the moſt certain and liberal relief, 'tis the remoteſt thing from their thoughts to make any addreſs to him. *They cry becauſe of the oppreſſion of the mighty, but none ſays where is God my Maker, who giveth ſongs in the night.* Rather periſh under their burdens than look towards God, when his own viſible hand is againſt them, or upon them, and their lives at his mercy; they ſtand it out to the laſt breath; and are more hardly *humbled* than *conſumed*; ſooner burn than weep; ſhrivel'd up into aſhes, ſooner than melted into tears. *Scorched with great heat, yet repent not to give glory to God:* Gnaw their tongues for pain, and yet ſtill more diſpoſed to blaſpheme, than pray or ſue for mercy. Dreadful thought! As to one another, Reconciliations among men are not impoſſible or unfrequent, even of mortal enemies; but they are utterly implacable towards God! yet they often wrong one another; but they cannot pretend God ever did them the leaſt wrong, yea they have liv'd by his bounty all their days. *They ſay to God, depart from us, yet he filleth their houſes with good things.* So true is the Hiſtorians * obſervation, *Hatred is ſharpeſt where moſt unjuſt.*

Job 35.

Rev. 16.

* *Tacitus* ſpeaking of the hatred of *Tiberius* and *Auguſta* againſt *Germanicus*, the cauſes whereof, ſaith he, were *aviſus, quia iniqua.*

Yea, when there *ſeems*, at leaſt, to have been

been a reconciliation wrought, are treacheries, Covenant-breakings, revolts, ſtrangeneſs, ſo frequent among men towards one another, as from them towards God? How inconſiſtent with friendſhip is it, according to common eſtimate, to be always promiſing, never performing; upon any or no occaſion to break off intercourſes, by unkind alienations, or mutual hoſtilities; to be moroſe, reſerv'd each to other; to decline or diſaffect each others converſe; to ſhut out one another from their hearts and thoughts. But how common and unregretted are theſe carriages towards the bleſſed God? It were eaſie to expatiate on this Argument, and multiply inſtances of this greater diſaffection. But in a word, what obſerving perſon may not ſee, what ſerious perſon would not grieve to ſee, the barbarous ſooner putting on civility; the riotous, ſobriety; the treacherous, fidelity; the moroſe, urbanity; the injurious, equity; the churliſh and covetous, benignity and charity; than the ungodly man piety and ſincere devotedneſs unto God. Here is the principal wound and diſtemper ſin hath infected the nature of man with: Though he have ſuffered a univerſal impairment, he is chiefly prejudic'd, in regard of his habitude and tendency towards God; and what concerns the duties of the firſt Table. Here the breach is greateſt, and here is greateſt need of repair. True it is, an inoffenſive winning deportment towards men, is not without its excellency,

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and neceſſity too. And it doth indeed unſufferably reproach Chriſtianity, and unbecome a Diſciple of Chriſt; yea it diſcovers a man not to be led by his Spirit, and ſo to be none of his; to indulge himſelf in immoral deportmentss towards men; to be undutiful towards ſuperiors; unconverſable towards equals; oppreſſive towards inferiors; unjuſt towards any. Yet is an holy diſpoſition of heart towards God, moſt earneſtly, and in the firſt place to be endeavoured (which will then draw on the reſt), as having in it, higheſt equity and excellency, and being of moſt immediate neceſſity to our bleſſedneſs.

Fifthly, Conſider, *That there may be ſome gradual tendencies, or fainter eſſays towards godlineſs, that fall ſhort of* real godlineſs, *or come not up to that thorough change and determination of heart God-ward, that is neceſſary to bleſſedneſs.* There may be a returning, *but not to the moſt high*, and wherein men may be (as the Prophet immediately ſubjoins) *like a deceitful Bow*, not fully bent, that will not reach the mark; they come not *home* to God. Many may be *almoſt perſwaded*; and even within reach of Heaven, *not far from the Kingdom of God*; may ſeek to enter, and not be able; their hearts being *ſomewhat inclinable*, but *more averſe*; for they can only be unable as they are unwilling. The Soul is in no poſſibility of taking up a complacential reſt in God, till it be brought to this, to move toward Him *ſpontaneouſly*, and

5. Hoſ. 7. 16.

with (as it were) a *ſelf-motion.* And then is *it ſelf moved* towards God, when its preponderating bent is towards him. As a maſſie Stone that one attempts to diſplace, if it be heav'd at till it preponderate, it then moves out by its own weight; otherwiſe it reverts, and lies *where* and *as* it did before. So 'tis with many mens hearts, all our lifting at them, is but the rolling of the returning Stone; they are mov'd, but not remov'd: Sometimes they are lifted at in the publick Miniſtry of the Word; ſometimes by a private ſeaſonable admonition; ſometimes God makes an affliction his Miniſter; a danger ſtartles them; a ſickneſs ſhakes them; and they think to change their courſe; but how ſoon do they change thoſe thoughts, and are where they were? what enlightnings and convictions, what awakenings and terrors, what remorſes, what purpoſes, what taſtes and reliſhes do ſome find in their own hearts, that yet are blaſted and come to nothing? How many miſerable abortions after travailing pangs and throws, and fair hopes of an happy birth of the new Creature? Often ſomewhat is produced that much reſembles it, but is not it. No *gracious principle* but may have its counterfeit in an *ungracious heart*; whence they deceive not others only, but themſelves, and think verily they are true converts while they are yet in their ſins. How many wretched Souls, that lie dubiouſly ſtrugling a long time, under the contrary alternate impreſſions of the *Goſ-*

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pel on the one hand, and the preſent evil *World* on the other; and give the day to their own ſenſual inclinations at laſt. In ſome degree, *eſcape the corruptions of the world, by the knowledg of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, but are again intangled and overcome, ſo as their latter end is worſe than their beginning.* Such a man is ſo far from being advantaged by his former faint inclinations towards God, that he will be found, at laſt, under this aggravated wickedneſs beyond all other men; that when others wandred from God through inadvertency and inconſideration, this man will be found to have been his enemy upon deliberation, and againſt the various ſtrivings of his convinced heart to the contrary. This is more eminently victorious and reigning enmity; ſuch a one takes great pains to periſh. Alas! 'tis not a ſlight touch, an overly ſuperficial tincture, ſome evanid ſentiments of piety, a few good thoughts or wiſhes, that beſpeak a *new man*, a *new creature*. 'Tis a *thorough prevailing change*, that quite alters the habitual poſture of a mans Soul, and determines it towards God, ſo as that the after courſe of his life may be capable of that denomination, *a living to God, a living after the Spirit*; That exalts the love of God into that Supremacy in him, that it becomes the *governing principle* of his life, and the *reaſon* and *meaſure* of his actions; that as he loves him above all things elſe, better than his own life, ſo he can truly (though poſſibly ſometimes 2 Pet. 2.

with a doubtful trembling heart) reſolve the ordinary courſe of his daily walking and practice into that *love*, as the *directive principle* of it. *I pray, I read, I hear, becauſe I love God.* I deſire to be juſt, ſober, charitable, meek, patient, *becauſe I love God.* This is the perfection and end of the love of God, (therefore *that* muſt needs be the principle *hereof*) *obedience to his will.* Herein appears that *power of Godlineſs*, denied (God knows) by too many that have the form: *The ſpirit of love, power,* and *of a ſound mind.* That only is a ſound mind, in which ſuch love rules in ſuch power. Is not love to God often pretended by ſuch, that when ever it comes to an actual competition, diſcover they love their own fleſh a great deal more; that ſeldom ever croſs their own wills to do his; or hazard their own fleſhly intereſt to promote his intereſt? we may juſtly ſay (as the Apoſtle, in a caſe fitly enough reducible hither), *how dwells the love of God in that man?* Notwithſtanding ſuch a ſubdued ineffectual love to God, ſuch a one ſhall be denominated and dealt with as an enemy. 'Tis not likely any man on earth, hates God ſo perfectly as thoſe in Hell. And is not every quality, not yet perfect in its kind, and that is yet growing more and more intenſe, in the mean time allayed by ſome degree of its contrary? Yet that over-maſtered degree denominates not its ſubject, nor ought a man from ſuch a ſuppoſed love to God, have the name of a *lo-*

1 Joh. 2. 5. Theſſalonians.
2 Tim. 3. 5. Chap. 1. 7.

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ver of him. That principle only is capable of denominating the man, that is prevalent and practical, that hath a governing influence on his heart and life. He in whom the love of God hath not ſuch power and rule, whatever his fainter inclination may be, is an *ungodly man.*

And now, methinks, theſe ſeveral Conſiderations compared and weighed together, ſhould contribute ſomething to the ſetling of right thoughts in the minds of ſecure ſinners, touching the *nature* and *neceſſity* of this *heart-change*; and do ſurely leave no place for the forementioned vain pretences that occaſioned them.

For (to give you a ſummary view of what hath been propounded in thoſe foregoing Conſiderations), It now plainly appears, *That the holy Scripture requires in him that ſhall enjoy this bleſſedneſs, a mighty change of the very temper of his Soul, as that which muſt diſpoſe him thereto; and which muſt therefore chiefly conſiſt, in the right framing of his heart towards God; towards whom it is moſt fixedly averſe, and therefore not eaſily ſuſceptible of ſuch a change.* And that any *ſlighter or more feeble inclination toward God, will not ſerve the turn; but ſuch only whereby the Soul is prevalently and habitually turned to him.*

And then what can be more abſurd, or unſavory? what more contrary to Chriſti-

an Doctrine, or common Reaſon? than inſtead of this neceſſary heart-change, to inſiſt upon ſo poor a Plea, as that mentioned above, as the only ground of ſo great a hope. How empty and frivolous will it appear in compariſon of this great Soul-transforming change, if we ſeverally conſider the particulars of it.

As for *Orthodoxy* in *Doctrinals*, 'tis in its ſelf an highly laudable thing; and in reſpect of the *Fundamentals* (for therefore are they ſo called) indiſpenſably neceſſary to bleſſedneſs. As *that* cannot be without *holineſs*, ſo nor *holineſs* without *truth*. But (beſides that this is that which every one pretends to) is every thing which is *neceſſary*, *ſufficient*? As to *natural neceſſity* (which is that we now ſpeak to), *reaſon*, an *Intellectual nature* are alſo neceſſary; ſhall therefore all men, yea and Devils too, be ſaved?

Joh. 17. 17.

Beſides, are you ſure you believe the grand Articles of the Chriſtian Religion? Conſider a little,

The { Grounds / Effects } of that pretended Faith.

Firſt, Its Grounds: Every *aſſent* is as the grounds of it are. Deal *truly* here with thy Soul. Can you tell wherefore you are a Chriſtian? what are thy inducements to be of this Religion? are they not ſuch as

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are common to thee with them that are of a falſe Religion? (I am here happily prevented by a worthy Author *, to which I recommend thee, but at the preſent a little bethink thy ſelf), Is it not poſſible thou may'ſt be a Chriſtian for the ſame reaſons for which one may be a *Jew*, or a *Mahometan*, or a meer *Pagan*? as *viz.* Education, Cuſtom, Law, Example, outward Advantage, &c. Now conſider, if thou find this upon enquiry to be thy caſe, the Motives of thy being a Chriſtian admit of being caſt together into this form of reaſoning.

* Mr. *Pinks* Trial of ſincere love to Chriſt.

That Religion which a Mans Forefathers were of, which is eſtabliſhed by Law, or generally obtains in the Country where he lives; The Profeſſion whereof, moſt conduces to, or beſt conſiſts with his credit, and other outward advantages, *that* Religion he is to imbrace as the *true Religion*. But ſuch I find the *Chriſtian Religion* to be to me: Therefore, &c.

The Propoſition here is manifeſtly falſe; for it contains grounds common to all Religions, publickly owned, and profeſt throughout the world; and ſure all cannot be true: And hence the Concluſion (though *materially conſidered* it be true, yet) *formally conſidered*, as a Concluſion iſſuing from ſuch premiſes, muſt needs be falſe; and what then is become of thy *Orthodoxy*; when as to the *formal object* of thy Faith, thou believeſt but as *Mahometans* and *Pagans* do? when thou art of *this* Faith, by *Fate* or

Chance only, not *Choice* or *rational Inducement*?

Next, as to the Effects of thy Faith: Let them be inquired into alſo, and they will certainly bear proportion to the Grounds of it. The *Goſpel* is the *power of God to ſalvation to every one that believes*; to them that believe it not, it ſignifies nothing. The Word of God received with a Divine Faith, as the Word of God, works effectually upon all that ſo receive it, *i.e.* all that believe. What ſuch efficacious workings of it haſt thou felt upon thy Soul? Certainly, its moſt *connatural* effect is *that very change of heart*, and inclination God-ward, of which we have been ſpeaking. What is ſo ſuitable to the Goſpel-Revelation, as a good temper of heart God-ward? And how abſurd is it, to introduce the cauſe on purpoſe to exclude its genuine inſeparable effect? But evident it is, (though true Faith cannot), that *ſuperficial irrational aſſent*, in which alone many glory, may too well conſiſt with a diſaffected heart towards God; and can it then ſignifie any thing towards thy bleſſedneſs? ſure to be ſo a Solifidian is to be a Nullifidian. Faith not working by Love, is not Faith; at leaſt profits nothing.

Rom. 1. 16
1 Theſ. 2. 13.

For thy outward conformity in the ſolemnities of worſhip, 'tis *imputable* to ſo corrupt motives and principles, that the *thing it ſelf*, abſtractively conſidered, can never be thought characteriſtical and diſtinguiſhing

ing of the heirs of bleſſedneſs. The worſt of men, may perform the beſt of outward duties.

Thy *moſt glorious boaſted vertues*, if they grow not from the proper root, *Love to God*, they are but ſplendid ſins, as above appears, and hath been truly ſaid of old.

Thy repentance is either true, or falſe; if true, it is that very change of mind and heart I ſpeak of, and is therefore eminently ſignaliz'd by that note, 'tis repentance [towards God]; if falſe, God will not be mocked.

For thy regeneration in Baptiſm; what Heb. 6. can it avail thee, *as to this bleſſedneſs*, if the preſent temper of thy heart be unſuitable thereto. Didſt thou ever know any that held, that *all the baptized ſhould be ſaved?* Will thy Infant-ſanctity excuſe the enmity and diſaffection to God of thy riper age?

In ſhort, If we ſeclude this work of God upon the Soul; how inconſiderable is the difference between the Chriſtian and the Heathen World? wherein can it then be underſtood to lie, but in ſome ineffectual Notions, and external Obſervances? And can it be thought, that the righteous holy God will make ſo vaſt a difference in the ſtates of men *hereafter*, who differ ſo little *here?* or that it ſhall ſo highly recommend a man to God, that it was his lot to be born, and to have liv'd upon ſuch a Turf or Soil, or in ſuch a Clime or part of the World?

World? His gracious Providence is thankfully to be acknowledg'd and ador'd, that hath aſſigned us our Stations under the Goſpel; but then it muſt be remembred, the Goſpel hath the goodneſs, not of the *end*, but of the *means*; which, as by our improvement or non-improvement, it becomes effectual or ineffectual, doth acquit from, or aggravate condemnation; and that it works not as a Charm or Spell, we know not how, or why, or when we think not of it; but by recommending it ſelf in the demonſtration and power of the Holy Ghoſt, to our Reaſon and Conſciences, to our Wills
Rom. 6. 17 and Affections, till we be delivered up into the Mold or Form of it. Surely were it ſo ſlight a matter, as too many fondly dream, that muſt diſtinguiſh between them that ſhall be ſaved and ſhall periſh; there would need no *ſtriving to enter in at the ſtrait gate*; and the Diſciples queſtion would never have been, *who then ſhall be ſaved?* but rather, who ſhall not be ſaved? nor would it have been reſolved by our Saviour into the immediate power of him alone, *to*
Mat. 19. *whom all things are poſſible*, that any are ſaved at all; nor have been ſo earneſtly aſ-
Joh. 6. ſerted by him, that *none could come to him, but whom his Father draws.*

The obvious import of which paſſages is ſuch, that if careleſs ſinners could once obtain of themſelves ſeriouſly to conſider them, methinks they ſhould find little reſt in their ſpirits, till they might diſcern a work

work wrought there, in some degree *worthy of God*, an impression some way proportionable to the power of an Almighty Arm; and that might speak God its Author. For notwithstanding the Souls natural capacities before asserted and inferred; its * Moral incapacity, I mean its wicked aversation from God, is such as none but God himself can overcome.

* That moral incapacity is also in some sense *truly natural*,

that is, in the same sense wherein we are said to be by nature *the children of wrath*, Eph. 2. 3. Therefore human nature must be considered as *created by God*, and as *propagated by man*, In the former sense, as God is the Author of it, 'tis taken in this distinction, of *moral and natural impotency*; which needs not further explication; yet you may take this account of it from Dr. *Twisse*, *Impotentia faciendi, quod Deo gratum est & acceptum non est impotentia* naturæ, *sed* morum. *Nulla itaque nobis data fuit facultas naturæ per peccatum originale, juxta illud* Augustini; *Nulli agnoscendi veritatis abstulit facultatem. Adhuc remanet potentia, quâ facere possumus quæcunque volumus.* Vind. l. 3. errat. 9. sect. 6. Naturalem potentiam, *quidlibet agendi pro arbitrio ipsorum dicimus ad omnes transmitti, non autem* potentiam moralem. Vindic. Criminat. 3. S. 1. digr. 2. Cap. 3.

Nor is that aversation the less culpable, for that it is so hardly overcome, but the more. 'Tis an aversation of *will*; and who sees not, that every man is more *wicked*, according as his *will* is more wickedly bent? Hence his impotency or inability to turn to God, is not such as *that he cannot turn if he would*; but it consists in this, *that he is not willing*. He affects a distance from God.

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Which ſhews therefore the neceſſity ſtill of this change. For the *poſſibility* of it, and the Encouragement (according to the Methods wherein God is wont to diſpenſe his Grace) the Sinner hath to hope and endeavour it, will more fitly fall into conſideration elſewhere.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

Fourth Inference. *That the Soul in which ſuch a change is wrought, reſtleſly purſues this Bleſſedneſs till it be attain'd.*

Fifth Inference. *That the knowing of God, and conformity to him, are ſatisfying things, and do now in a degree ſatisfie, according to the meaſure wherein they are attained.*

Sixth Inference. *That the love of God towards his people is great, that hath deſigned for them ſo great, and even a ſatisfying good.*

4. 'TIS further to be inferr'd, *That a Soul wherein ſuch a change is wrought, purſues this bleſſedneſs with reſtleſs ſupreme deſire, till it attain to the fulneſs thereof.* We have here a plainly implied deſcription of the poſture and tendency of ſuch a Soul (even of a ſanctified holy Soul, which had therefore undergone this bleſſed change) towards this ſtate of bleſſedneſs. *I ſhall* (ſaith he) *be ſatisfied with thy likeneſs, q. d.* I cannot be ſatisfied otherwiſe. We have ſeen how great a change is neceſſary to diſpoſe the 4. *Infer.*

the Soul to this bleſſedneſs, which being once wrought, nothing elſe can now ſatisfie it. Such a thing is this bleſſedneſs, (I ſpeak now of ſo much of it as is previous and conducing to ſatisfaction, or of bleſſedneſs materially conſidered, the Divine glory to be beheld and participated): 'Tis of that nature, it makes the Soul reſtleſs, it lets it not be quiet, after it hath got ſome apprehenſion of it, till it attain the full enjoyment. The whole life of ſuch a one, is a continual *ſeeking Gods face*. So attractive is this glory of a ſubject rightly diſpoſed to it. While others crave *Corn and Wine*, this is the ſum of the holy Soul's deſires, *Lord lift*
Pſal. 4. *thou up the light of thy countenance*, &c. The ſame thing is the object of its *preſent deſires* that ſhall be of its *eternal ſatisfaction* and *enjoyment*. This is now its *one thing*, the re-
Pſal. 27. queſt inſiſted on, *to behold the beauty of the Lord*, &c. and while in any meaſure it doth ſo, yet 'tis ſtill looking for this bleſſed hope, ſtill hoping to be like him, ſee him as he is. The expectation of ſatisfaction in this ſtate, implies the reſtleſs working of deſire till then; for what is this *ſatisfaction*, but the fulfilling of our *deſires*, the perfecting of the Souls *motions* in a complacential *reſt*. *Motion* and *reſt* do exactly correſpond each to other. Nothing can *naturally* reſt in any place to which it was not before *naturally* inclin'd to move. And the *reſt* is proportionably more compos'd and ſteady, according as the *motion* was ſtronger and more vigorous. By

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how much the heavier any body is, ſo much the ſtronger and leſs reſiſtible is its motion downward; and then accordingly, it is leſs movable when it hath attained its reſting place. 'Tis therefore a vanity and contradiction, to ſpeak of the Souls being *ſatisfied* in that which it was not before *deſirous* of *. And that ſtate, which it ſhall ultimately and eternally *acquieſce* in (with a *reſt* that muſt therefore be underſtood to be moſt compoſed and ſedate), towards it muſt it needs *move* with the ſtrongeſt and moſt unſatisfied *deſire*; a *deſire* that is ſupreme, prevalent, and triumphant over all other deſires, and over all obſtructions to it ſelf; leaſt capable of diverſion, or of pitching upon any thing ſhort of the term aimed at. Ask therefore the holy Soul, *What is thy Supreme deſire?* and ſo far as it underſtands it ſelf, it muſt anſwer, *To ſee and partake the divine glory; to behold the bleſſed face of God, till his likeneſs be transfuſed through all my powers, and his entire image be perfectly formed in me: Preſent to my view what elſe you will, I can be ſatisfied in nothing elſe but this.*

* Aptitudinally (I mean), and *Ex hypotheſi*, *i. e.* ſuppoſing the knowledg of the object: Otherwiſe, as to actual explicite deſires, God doth give us beyond what we can ask or think. But 'tis impoſſible the Soul ſhould reſt ſatisfied in that, which upon knowledg it is undeſirous of, and doth, or would reject.

Therefore this leaves a black note upon thoſe wretched Souls, that are wholly ſtrangers to ſuch deſires; that would be better ſatisfied to dwell always in duſt; that ſhun the

the bleſſed face of God as hell it ſelf; and to whom the moſt deſpicable vanity is a more deſirable ſight than that of divine glory. Miſerable Souls! Conſider your ſtate, can that be your bleſſedneſs which you deſire not? or do you think God will receive any into his bleſſed preſence, to whom it ſhall be a burden? Methinks, upon the reading of this, you ſhould preſently doom your ſelves, and ſee your ſentence written in your breaſts. Compare your hearts with this holy mans; ſee if there be any thing like this in the temper of your ſpirits; and never think well of your ſelves till you find it ſo.

5. *Infer.* 5. *The knowledg of God, and conformity to him, are, in their own nature, apt to ſatisfie the deſires of the Soul, and even now actually do ſo, in the meaſure wherein they are attained.* Some things are not of a *ſatisfying nature*; there is nothing tending to ſatisfaction in them. And then the continual heaping together of ſuch things, doth no more towards ſatisfaction, than the accumulating of Mathematical Points would towards the compacting of a ſolid Body; or the multiplication of Cyphers only, to the making of a Sum. But *what ſhall one day ſatisfie*, hath in its ſelf *a power and aptitude thereto.* The *act* (whenever it is) ſuppoſes the *power.* Therefore the hungry craving Soul, that would fain be *happy*, but knows not how, needs not ſpend its days in making uncertain gueſſes, and fruitleſs attempts and trials: It may fix its

its hovering thoughts; and upon aſſurance here given, ſay, I have now found at laſt where ſatisfaction may be had; and have only this to do, to bend all my powers hither, and intend this one thing, the poſſeſſing my ſelf of this bleſſed reſt; *earneſtly* to endeavour, and *patiently* to wait for it.

Happy diſcovery! welcom tidings! I now know which way to turn my eye, and direct my purſuit. I ſhall no longer ſpend my ſelf in dubious toilſom wandrings, in anxious vain enquirie. I have found! I have found! bleſſedneſs is here. If I can but get a lively efficacious ſight of God, I have enough---- *Shew me the Father, and it ſufficeth.*

Let the weary wandring Soul bethink it ſelf, and retire to God; He will not mock thee with ſhadows, as the World hath done. *This is eternal life, to know him the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom he hath ſent.* Apart from Chriſt thou canſt not know nor ſee him with fruit and comfort; but the Goſpel-Revelation (which is the Revelation of God in Chriſt) gives thee a lovely proſpect of him. His glory ſhines in the face of Jeſus Chriſt; and when, by beholding it, thou art changed into the ſame likeneſs, and findeſt thy ſelf gradually changing more and more from glory to glory, thou wilt find thy ſelf accordingly in a gradual tendency towards ſatisfaction and bleſſedneſs: That is, do but ſeriouſly ſet thy ſelf to ſtudy and contemplate the *Being* and *Attributes* of God; and then look upon him as, through the Mediator,

he is willing to be reconcil'd to thee, and become thy God; and ſo long let thine eye fix and dwell here, till it affect thy heart, and the proper impreſs of the Goſpel be by the Spirit of the Lord inſtamp't upon it; till thou find thy ſelf wrought to a compliance with his holy will, and his image formed in thee; and thou ſhalt ſoon experience thou art entring into his reſt; and wilt reliſh a more ſatisfying pleaſure in this bleſſed change, than all thy worldly ſenſual enjoyments did ever afford thee before.

Surely, if the perfect viſion and perception of his glorious likeneſs will yeild a compleat ſatisfaction at laſt, the initial and progreſſive tendencies towards the *former*, will *proportionably* infer the *latter*.

'Tis obvious hence to collect, who are in this world (ordinarily and, *cæteris paribus*, where more unuſual violent temptations hinder not) the moſt *ſatisfied* and *contented* perſons; even thoſe that have moſt of the clarifying ſights of God, and that thence partake moſt of his Image (indeed Scripture only vouchſafes the name to ſuch ſights of
1 Joh. 3. 6. 3 Joh. 11. God, *he that doth evil hath not ſeen God*). Such as have moſt of a godly frame wrought into *their ſpirits*, and that have hearts moſt attempered and conformed to God, Theſe are the moſt contented perſons in the world. Content is part of the gain that attends godlineſs; it concurring, renders the other a
1 Tim. 6. 6. great gain; [*---godlineſs with contentment*]; the form of expreſſion diſcovers how connatural

natural *contentment* is to *godlineſs*; as if they were not to be mentioned apart. Godlineſs, as if he had ſaid, is a very gainful thing, but if you would comprehend the gainfulneſs of it fully, do not abſtract too curiouſly, take in with it that which is of ſo near an alliance, that you will hardly know how to conſider them apart; let its inſeparable adjunct *contentment*, go along with it, and you will find it a gainful thing indeed.

The true *knowledg* of God ſo directly tends to *holineſs*, and that to *contentation*, that it may be too evidently concluded, that a diſcontented perſon hath little of the one or the other, not much knowledg, and leſs grace; he is ſo far from being like God, that in the Apoſtles language above we may ſay, *he hath not ſeen him.* Doth that perſon know God, or hath ever ſeen him, that falls not into the duſt, admiring ſo glorious a Majeſty? that ſubjects not himſelf to him, with Loyal affections, accounting it his only grand concernment to pleaſe, and ſerve him? But the diſcontented perſon takes upon him, as if he were God alone, and as if he expected every creature to do him homage, and thought the creation were made for the pleaſure and ſervice of none but him. Hath that perſon ever ſeen God, that acknowledges him not a ſufficient portion, a full, all-comprehending good? Hath he ſeen him, that ſees not reaſon to truſt him, to commit all his concernments to him? Hath he ſeen him, that loves him not, and delights not

in his love? Hath he ſeen him, that quits not all for him, and abandons not every private intereſt to eſpouſe his; and how evidently do theſe things tend to quiet and compoſe the Soul? Diſcontent proceeds from idolizing thoughts of our ſelves; 'tis rooted in ſelf-conceit, in ſelf-dependence, ſelf-love, ſelf-ſeeking, all which deſpicable Idols (or that one great Idol, *Self*, thus variouſly ſerved and Idolized) one *ſight* of the Divine Glory would confound and bring to nothing. The ſights of God melt the heart, break it under a ſenſe of ſin, and hence compoſe it to a meek, peaceful humility; but the diſcontented ſpirit is an unbroken, proud, imperious ſpirit. The ſights of God purifie the Soul, refine it from the droſs of this vile world, make it daily aſpire to a conformity unto the pure and ſpiritual nature of God. But a diſcontented ſpirit, is a ſenſual terrene ſpirit (for what, but ſuch objects, are the uſual matter of moſt mens diſcontents?) taking ſenſuality in its juſt latitude, 'tis a low dunghil ſpirit, fit for nothing but to rake and ſcrabble in the dirt.

I inſiſt upon this, apprehending (what deſerves more lamentations than it hath obſervation), that too many annex a profeſſion of eminent godlineſs and ſpirituality, to an indulged, querulous, impatient temper of ſpirit; join a ſplendid appearance of piety, to an unreformed perverſe frowardneſs (which agree as well as a Jewel of Gold to a Swines ſnout), nothing pleaſes them; their mercies

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are not worth the acknowledging; their afflictions intolerable, not to be born. They fall out and quarrel with all occurrences, actions, events; neither Man, nor God, doth any thing good in their ſight. The world is not well govern'd; nothing falls out well as to themſelves. What can poſſibly be thought on more repugnant to the knowledg of God, the grand deſign of all Religion, and the very Spirit of the Goſpel, than this temper? Which way do theſe tend and aim, but to lead Souls to bleſſedneſs; to bring them into a peaceful, happy, ſatisfied ſtate and frame? and muſt we, becauſe that end cannot be attained *here*, therefore go the quite contrary way? or pretend we are going to heaven with our backs turned upon it? Sure the diſcoveries God now makes of himſelf to us, and by which he impreſſes his likeneſs upon his own (though they ultimately deſign our ſatisfaction and bleſſedneſs in heaven, as intermediate thereunto; they aim at the bringing us into an Heaven upon Earth; to form us unto a life agreeable and that hath analogy with that of Heaven; unto which nothing is more analogous in our preſent ſtate, than that peace and ſerenity which reſult from divine knowledg and holineſs; nothing more inconſiſtent, than a peeviſh, fretful, turbulent Spirit. The *one* is a participation of a bright and mild light from Heaven; the *other*, of a dark and raging fire from Hell? 'Tis only Gods face, his glorious likeneſs reflected on our Souls,

that ſhall ſatisfie hereafter, and make Heaven, Heaven. He doth not now wholly conceal himſelf from us, nor altogether hide his face. The ſhining of the ſame face (in what degree he now vouchſafes it) will make this Earth an Heaven too. One glance towards him, may tranſmit a lively pleaſant luſtre upon our ſpirits, (*they looked to him, and were lightned*). And we live in the expectation of clearer and more impreſſive eternal viſions. It will become us to expreſs a preſent ſatisfiedneſs, proportionable to our preſent ſights and expectations; and to endeavour daily to ſee more and to be more like God; that we may be daily more and more ſatisfied; while we cannot yet attain to be making gradual approaches towards that bleſſed ſtate. By how much any have more of the viſion and likeneſs of God in their preſent ſtate, ſo much they approach nearer unto ſatisfaction.

Pſal. 34. 5.

6. *Infer.* 6. We infer; *The love of God to his people is great, which hath deſigned for them ſo great, and even a ſatisfying good.* We cannot overlook the occaſion this Doctrine gives us, to conſider and contemplate a while the love of God. If this ſhall be the bleſſedneſs of his Saints, 'tis a great love that ſhall be the Spring and Source of it.

Two things, here before our eyes, diſcover the greatneſs of this love: That it deſigns ſatisfaction to the perſons meant; and that

that they ſhall be ſatisfied with the *divine viſion* and *likeneſs*.

1. *It deſigns their ſatisfaction.* This is as far as love can go. 'Tis love to the uttermoſt: It doth not ſatisfie it ſelf, till it ſatisfie them. 'Tis love to ſpare an enemy, to relieve a ſtranger; but to ſatisfie for ever them that were both; this ſure exceeds all the wonted meaſures of love. Much love is ſhewn in the forgiveneſs of ſin, in the ſupply of neceſſities; but herein (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks in another caſe) is the love of God perfected (as to its exerciſe) it hath now perfectly attained its end; when it hath not left ſo much as a craving deſire, not a wiſh unſatisfied; the Soul cannot ſay, *I wiſh it were better; O that I had but this one thing more to compleat my happineſs.* It hath neither pretence nor inclination to think ſuch a thought. Divine Love is now at reſt. It was travailing (big with gracious deſigns) before; it hath now delivered it ſelf. It would rather create new heavens every moment, than not ſatisfie: But it hath now done it to the full; the utmoſt capacity of the Soul is filled up; it can be no happier than it is. This is loves triumph over all the miſeries, wants, and deſires of a languiſhing Soul. The appropriate, peculiar glory of Divine love. If all the excellencies of the whole Creation beſides, were contracted into one glorious Creature, it would never be capable of this boaſt, I have ſatisfied one Soul. The love of God leaves none unſa-

tisfied, but the proud deſpiſers of it. Now is the eternal Sabbath of Love. Now it enters into reſt, having finiſht all its works; it views them over now with delight, for lo they are all good; Its works of Pardon, of Juſtification, and Adoption; Its works of Regeneration, of Converſion, and Sanctification; Its eſtabliſhing, quickning, comforting works; they are all good, good in themſelves, and in this their end, the *ſatisfaction andrepoſe of bleſſed Souls.* Now Divine Love puts on the Crown, aſcends the Throne, and the many Myriads of glorified Spirits fall down about it, and adore: All profeſs to owe to it the ſatisfying pleaſures they all enjoy. Who can conſider the unſpeakable ſatisfaction of thoſe bleſſed Spirits, and not alſo reflect upon this exalted greatneſs of Divine Love!

2. 'Tis again great Love, if we conſider, *wherewith they ſhall be ſatisfied.* The ſight and participation of the Divine Glory, his face, his likeneſs, his repreſented and impreſſed glory. There may be great love that never undertakes nor ſtudies to ſatisfie all the deſires of the perſons we caſt our love upon; eſpecially where nothing will ſatisfie but high and great matters. The love of God knows no difficulties; nor can be overſet. The greater the performance or vouchſafement, the more ſutable to Divine Love. It hath reſolved to give the Soul a plenary ſatisfaction, perfectly to content all its deſires; and ſince nothing elſe can do it, but

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an eternal beholding of the glorious face of the Divine Majeſty, and a transformation into his own likeneſs, that ſhall not be withheld. Yea it hath created, refined, enlarged its capacity on purpoſe, that it might be ſatisfied with nothing leſs. Great love may ſometimes be ſignified by a glance; the offered view of a willing face. Thus our Lord Jeſus invites his Church to diſcover her own love, and anſwer his, *Let me ſee thy face*, &c. *Cant.* 2. 14. Love is not more becomingly expreſt or gratified, than by mutual looks, [*ubi amor, ibi oculus*]. How great is that love, that purpoſely layes aſide the vail, that never turns away its own, nor permits the averſion of the beholders eye, throughout eternity. Now, we ſee in a glaſs; then, *face* to *face*; as if never weary of beholding on either part; but on that part the condeſcenſion lies, is the tranſcendent admirable love. *That* a generous beneficent, the *other* (till it be ſatisfied here) a craving indigent love. And how inexpreſſible a condeſcenſion is this? Poor wretches! many of whom, poſſibly, were once ſo low, that a ſtrutting Grandee would have thought himſelf affronted by their look, and have met with threatning rebukes their over-daring venturous eye; lo now they are permitted (to ſtand before Princes; that's a mean thing) to feed their eyes with Divine glory, to view the face of God. He ſets them before his face for ever.

And that eternal viſion begets in them an

an *eternal likeneſs*, they behold and partake glory at once, that their joy may be full. They behold not a glorious God with deformed Souls; that would render them a perpetual abomination and torment to themſelves. Love cannot permit that Heaven ſhould be their affliction; that they ſhould have cauſe to loath and be weary of themſelves in that preſence. It ſatisfies them, by cloathing and filling them with glory; by making them partake of the Divine likeneſs, as well as behold it. 'Tis reckon'd a great expreſſion of a complying love, but to give a Picture; when the parties loved only permit themſelves to view in a mute repreſentation, a vicarious face. This is much more a vital Image (as before) Gods own living likeneſs propagated in the Soul; the inchoation of it is called, the *Divine Nature*, the *Seed of God*. What amazing love is this, of the great God to a worm? not to give over till he have aſſimilated it to his own glory; till it appear as a ray of Light be-
1 Joh. 2. gotten of the Father of Lights. *Every one,*
ult. ſaith the Apoſtle, *that doth righteouſneſs is born of him*; and then it follows, *Behold,*
Chap. 3. 1. *what manner of love---to be the ſons of God; to be like him, to ſee him as he is*, &c. How great a word is that (ſpoken in reference to our preſent ſtate)---*to make us partakers*
Heb. 12. *of* [*his*] *holineſs*. And (as well it might) 'tis inſtanc'd as an effect and argument of love, (for ſure chaſtening, it ſelf abſtracted from that end of it, doth not import love)

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Whom the Lord loveth, he chaſteneth,— and then by and by, in the ſame ſeries and line of diſcourſe, is added, —*to make us partakers of his holineſs.* Love always either ſuppoſes ſimilitude, or intends it; and is ſufficiently argued by it either way. And ſure, the love of God cannot be more directly expreſſed, than in his firſt intending to make a poor Soul like him, while he loves it with compaſſion; and then imprinting and perfecting that likeneſs, that he may love it with eternal delight. Love is here the *firſt* and the *laſt*, the *beginning* and *end* in all this buſineſs.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

Seventh Inference. *That ſince this bleſſedneſs is limited to a qualified ſubject* [I in righteouſneſs], *the unrighteous are neceſſarily left excluded.*

Eighth Inference. *That righteouſneſs is no vain thing, in as much as it hath ſo happy an iſſue, and ends ſo well.*

7. *Infer.* 7. *CONſidering this bleſſedneſs is not common, but limited to a qualified ſubject* [I in righteouſneſs], a perſon cloath'd in righteouſneſs: It evidently follows, *The unrighteous are neceſſarily excluded and ſhut out, can have no part nor portion in this bleſſedneſs.* The ſame thing that the Apoſtle tells us, 1 Cor. 6. without an inference; *Know ye not, that the unrighteous ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, &c. Intimating that to be a moſt confeſſed known thing: *Know ye not?* is it poſſible ye can be ignorant of this?

The *natural neceſſity* of what hath been here infer'd, hath been argued already, from the conſideration of the *nature of this bleſſedneſs*. The *legal neceſſity* of it, ariſing from the

the Divine Will and Law, is that I mainly intend at preſent. By *ſuch* a neceſſity alſo, they are excluded, who by Gods Rule (according to which the ſupreme Judgment muſt be managed) ſhall be found unrighteous: Thoſe that come not up to the terms of the Goſpel-Covenant; never accepted the offers, nor ſubmitted to the commands of it; and that hence conſequently are unrelated to Chriſt, and ununited to him; no way capable of advantage by his moſt perfect and all-ſufficient righteouſneſs, that alone fully anſwers all the exactions and demands of the Covenant of Works: And ſo, who are at laſt found unrighteous by the Old Law and the New; the Law both of the Creator and Redeemer too.

There is the ſame neceſſity theſe ſhould be excluded, as that God ſhould be juſt and true. The word is gone forth of his mouth in righteouſneſs, and cannot return. He did not dally with ſinners, when he ſettled thoſe Conſtitutions, whence this neceſſity reſults. *He is not a man, that he ſhould lie; nor the Son of man, that he ſhould repent.* An Heathen underſtood ſo much of the nature of God.

I have thought ſometimes, with much wonder, of the ſtupid folly of unſanctified hearts; they are even confounded in their own wiſhes; and would have (in order to their ſecurity) they know not what. Were the queſtion faithfully put to the very heart of ſuch an one, What wouldſt thou have done

done in order to thy eternal ſafety from divine wrath and vengeance? would not the anſwer be, O that God would recall thoſe ſevere Conſtitutions he hath made; and not inſiſt ſo ſtrictly on what he hath required in the Goſpel, in order to the ſalvation of ſinners. But fooliſh wretch! doſt thou know what thou ſay'ſt? wouldſt thou have God repeal the Goſpel, that thou may'ſt be the more ſecure? in what a caſe art thou then? Haſt thou no hope if the Goſpel ſtand in force? what hope wilt thou have if it do not? Muſt the hopes of all the World be ruin'd to eſtabliſh thine? and yet leave them involv'd in the common ruin too? What, but the Goſpel gives the leaſt hope to Apoſtate ſinners? There is now hope for thee in the Goſpel-Promiſe, if thou return to God.

Iſa. 55. *Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon.*

But take away the Goſpel, and where art thou? Were it poſſible for thee to repent, and become a new man; what ſettles the connexion between Repentance and Salvation, but the Goſpel-Promiſe? Will the violated Law of Works accept thy Repentance inſtead of Obedience? Doth it not expreſly preclude any ſuch expectation? Doth it give any ground to look for any thing but death after ſin? Thou muſt therefore fly to the Goſpel, or yeild thy ſelf loſt: And know, it contains none but *faithful* and *true* ſayings,

ings, that have more ſtability in them than the foundations of heaven and earth: Therefore expect nothing to be altered for thy ſake. The Goſpel-Conſtitution was ſettled long before thou waſt born: Thou com'ſt too late with thy Exceptions (if thou hadſt any) againſt it. Remember therefore, this is one of the unalterable determinations of this Goſpel, *without holineſs thou ſhalt never ſee God*, or (which amounts to the ſame) *thou canſt not behold his face but in righteouſneſs.* There is no word in all the Bible of more certain truth than this. In this alſo how apt are ſinners fooliſhly to intangle themſelves. The Goſpel is true and to be believed, till they meet with ſomething that croſſes them, and goes againſt the hair, and then they hope it is not ſo. But vain man! If once thou ſhake the truth of God, what wilt thou ſtay thy ſelf upon? Is God true when he promiſes? and is he not as true when he threatens? If that be a true ſaying, *Say to the righteous, it ſhall be well with him,*— is not that as much to be regarded, *Wo to the wicked, it ſhall be ill with him. The righteouſneſs of the righteous ſhall be upon him, and the wickedneſs of the wicked ſhall be upon him.* Are not theſe of equal authority? If thou hadſt any reaſon to *hope* thou mayeſt be happy though thou never be righteous; is there not as much reaſon to *fear* thou might'ſt be miſerable though thou be; ſince the one is as much againſt the flat expreſs word of God as the other? Let not thy

love

love to ſin betray thee out of all Religion and thy Wits together. Wherein wilt thou believe one upon the bare value of his word, that will lie to thee in any thing? Yea, and as it is the ſame authority that is affronted in every command, whence diſobedience to one is a breach of all; ſo is the ſame veracity denied in every truth; and the disbelief of one belies all; and wilt thou believe him in any thing, thou haſt proclaimed a liar in every thing? Therefore, ſo little haſt thou gained by disbelieving the divine Revelation in this thing, that thou haſt brought thy ſelf to this miſerable *Dilemma*; if the word of God be falſe, thou haſt no foundation of any Faith left thee; if it be true, it dooms thee to eternal baniſhment from his bleſſed face, while thou remaineſt in thy unrighteouſneſs. It will not be thy advantage then to disbelieve this Goſpel-record; but to conſider it, and take it to heart; 'twill prove never the leſs true at laſt, for that thou wilt not believe it, *ſhall thy unbelief make the truth of God of none effect?* And if thou wouldſt but reaſonably conſider the caſe, methinks thou ſhouldſt ſoon be convinc't. Since thou acknowledgeſt (as I ſuppoſe thee to do), that there are two ſtates of men in the other World, *a ſtate of bleſſedneſs*, and *a ſtate of miſery*; and two ſorts of men in this World, the *righteous*, and the *unrighteous*: Let thy reaſon and conſcience now judg, who ſhall be allotted to the one ſtate, and who to the other. Sure, if thou acknow-

acknowledg a righteous Judg of all the World, thou canſt not think he will turn men promiſcuouſly into Heaven or Hell at random, without diſtinction: Much leſs canſt thou be ſo abſurd and mad, as to think all the unrighteous ſhall be ſaved, and the righteous periſh: And then what is left thee to judg, but that which I am now urging upon thee, That when the righteous ſhall be admitted to the viſion of Gods bleſſed face, the unrighteous ſhall be driven forth into outer darkneſs.

It may be, ſome here will be ready to ſay, But to what purpoſe is all this, they were of the ſame mind before, and cannot think that any one would ever ſay the contrary.

Nor do I think ſo either; but 'tis one thing not to believe a concluſion to be true, and another to profeſs a contrary belief: And one thing to believe a concluſion, another to think we believe it. Men often know not their own minds. In practical matters, 'tis beſt ſeen what a mans belief is by his practice: For when any profeſs to believe this or that practical truth, relating to their ſalvation, if they believe it not practically, *i.e.* with ſuch a belief as will command their ſutable practice, it matters not what belief they are of, or whether they were of that judgment or no: Yea it will prove in the iſſue, better for them they had been of another, when their own profeſſed belief ſhall be urged againſt them. But let us con-

ſider a little, how in practical matters of leſs concernment we would eſtimate a mans belief: You meet a Traveller upon the way, who tells you, the Bridg over ſuch an unpaſſable River is broken down, and that if you venture, you periſh; if you believe him, you return; if you hold on, he reaſonably concludes, you believe him not; and will therefore be apt to ſay to you, if you will not believe me, you may make trial: Your Phyſician tells you, a diſeaſe is growing upon you, that in a ſhort time will prove incurable and mortal, but if you preſently uſe means he ſhall preſcribe, 'tis capable of an eaſie remedy: How would you your ſelf have your belief of your Phyſitian judged of in this caſe; would you expect to be believed, if you ſhould ſay, you do not at all diſtruſt your Phyſitians integrity and judgment, but yet you reſolve not to follow his directions? unleſs you would have us believe too, that you are weary of your life, and would fain be rid of it. There is no Riddle or Myſtery in this. How ridiculous would men make themſelves, if in matters of common concernment they ſhould daily practice directly contrary to their profeſſed belief? How few would believe them ſerious, or in their wits? But however, call this believing, or what you will, we contend not about the name; the belief of ſuch a thing can no further do you good, you can be nothing the better for it, further than as it engages you to take a courſe

courſe ſutable and conſequent to ſuch a belief. To believe that there is a Hell, and run into it; that unrighteouſneſs perſiſted in will damn you, and yet live in it. To what purpoſe is it, to make your boaſts of this Faith?

But ſince you are willing to call this believing; all the foregoing reaſoning is to engage you to *conſider what you believe.* Do you believe, that *unrighteouſneſs will be the death of your Soul; will eternally ſeparate you from God*, and *the preſence of his glory?* and when you have reaſon'd the matter with your ſelf, you find it to be *certainly ſo: Should not ſuch a thing be more deeply pondered? The bare propoſal of an evident truth commands preſent aſſent*; but if I *further* bend my *mind* to reaſon out the ſame thing to my ſelf, I am occaſioned to take notice of the grounds, dependencies, the habitudes of it, what it reſts upon, and whither it tends, and thence more diſcern its importance, and of what moment it is, than I ſhould have done, if upon firſt view I had aſſented only, and diſmiſt it my thoughts. And yet is it poſſible, you ſhould think this to be *true*, and not think it a moſt *important truth*? Is it a ſmall matter in your account, whether you ſhall be bleſſed or miſerable for ever? whether you be ſaved or periſh eternally? Or is it conſidered by you, according as the weight of the matter requires, that as you are found righteous, or unrighteous, ſo will it everlaſtingly fare with you?

You may poſſibly ſay, you already conclude your ſelf righteous, therefore no further imploy your thoughts about it.

But methinks, you ſhould hardly be able however to put ſuch a thing out of your thoughts; while as yet the final determination is not given in the caſe. If a man have a queſtion yet depending, concerning his life or eſtate; though his buſineſs be never ſo clear, he will hardly forget it, the trial not being yet paſt. And though in this matter, you have no reaſon to ſuſpect error or corruption in your Judg (through which many honeſt cauſes may miſcarry in an human Judicature) yet have you no reaſon to ſuſpect your ſelf? If the holy Spirit hath *aſſured you*, it hath not *ſtupified you*; but as you have then the leſs of *fear*, you have the more of *love* and *joy*. Therefore you will not thence mind ſuch a concernment the *leſs*, but with the *more delight*; and therefore alſo, moſt probably, with the more frequency and intention. What a pleaſure will it be to review evidences, and ſay, lo here are the *Mediums* by which I make out my Title to the Eternal Inheritance. Such and ſuch Characters give me the confidence, to number my ſelf among Gods righteous ones. And do you lead that heavenly raiſed life? do you live in thoſe ſweet and raviſhing comforts of the Holy Ghoſt, that may beſpeak you one whom he hath ſealed up to the day of redemption?

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If you pretend not to any ſuch certainty, but rely upon your own judgment of your caſe; are you ſure you are neither miſtaken in the notion of the righteouſneſs required, nor in the application of it to your own Soul?

Poſſibly, you may think your ſelf, becauſe in your ordinary dealings you wrong no man (your ſelf being judg), a very righteous perſon. But evident it is, when the Scripture uſes this term as deſcriptive of Gods own people, and to diſtinguiſh between them that ſhall be ſaved and periſh, it takes it in that comprehenſive ſenſe before explained. And however, it requires at leaſt much more of thee, under other expreſſions, as thou canſt hardly be ſo ignorant but to know. And do but uſe thy reaſon here a little, and demand of thy ſelf: Is he to be accounted a righteous perſon, that thinks it fit to avoid wronging a man, but makes no conſcience at all of wronging God? More particularly: Is it righteous, to live all thy days in a willing ignorance of the Author of thy being, never once to enquire, *Where is God my Maker?* Is it righteous, to Job 35. forget him days without number, not to have him from day to day in all thy thoughts? Is it righteous, to eſtrange thy ſelf from him, and live as without him in the world, while thou liv'ſt, mov'ſt, and haſt thy being in him? not to glorifie him in whoſe hands thy breath is? to be a lover of pleaſure more than God? a worſhipper, in thy very

Soul, of the creature more than the Creator? Is it righteous, to harden thy heart againſt his fear and love? to live under his power, and never reverence it; his goodneſs, and never acknowledg it? to affront his Authority, to belie his Truth, abuſe his Mercy, impoſe upon his Patience, defie his Juſtice; to exalt thy own intereſt againſt his; the trifling petite intereſt of a ſilly worm, againſt the great all-comprehending intereſt of the common Lord of all the world? to croſs his will, to do thy own? to pleaſe thy ſelf, to the diſpleaſing of him? whence hadſt thou thy meaſures of Juſtice, if this be juſt?

Again, Is it righteous, to deny the Lord that bought thee, to neglect that great ſalvation which he is the Author of? And whereas he came to bleſs thee, in turning thee from thine iniquities, wilfully to remain ſtill in an accurſed ſervitude to ſin? *when he was made manifeſt to deſtroy the works of the Devil*, ſtill to yeild thy ſelf *a captive at his will*? whereas he died that thou might'ſt not *any longer live to thy ſelf*, but *to him that died for thee, and roſe again*; and that he *might redeem thee from thy vain converſation*, and that thou art ſo expreſly told, that ſuch as ſtill lead ſenſual lives, mind earthly things, have not their converſation in heaven, are enemies to the Croſs of Chriſt. Is it no unrighteouſneſs, that in theſe reſpects thy whole life ſhould be nothing elſe but a conſtant contradiction to the very deſign of his dying?

ing? a perpetual Hoſtility, a very Tilting at his Croſs? Is there no unrighteouſneſs in thy obſtinate infidelity, that wickedly denies belief to his glorious Truths, acceptance of his gracious Offers, ſubjection to his holy Laws? No unrighteouſneſs in thy obſtinate, remorſleſs impenitency? thy heart that cannot repent? that melts not, while a crucified Jeſus, amidſt his agonies and dying pangs, cries to thee from the Croſs, *O ſinner, enough, thy hard heart breaks mine! yeild at laſt, and turn to God.* Is it righteous, to live as no way under Law to Chriſt? to perſiſt in actual rebellion againſt his juſt Government, which he died and revived and roſe again, to eſtabliſh over the living and the dead? yea, and that while thou pretendeſt thy ſelf a Chriſtian? In a word: Is it righteous, to tread under foot the Son of God, to vilifie his Blood, and deſpiſe his Spirit? Is this the righteouſneſs that thou talkeſt of? Are theſe thy qualifications for the everlaſting bleſſedneſs?

If thou ſay, thou confeſſeſt thou art *in thy ſelf*, in theſe ſeveral reſpects, altogether unrighteous; but thou hopeſt the righteouſneſs of Chriſt will be ſufficient to anſwer for all.

No doubt, Chriſts righteouſneſs is abundantly available to all the ends for which it was intended by the Father and Him; but it ſhall never anſwer all the ends that a fooliſh wicked heart will fondly imagine to it ſelf.

In ſhort, It ſerves to excuſe thy non-performance of, and ſtands inſtead of thy perfect ſinleſs obedience to the *Law of works*; but it ſerves not inſtead of thy performance of what is required of thee, as the *Condition of the Goſpel-Covenant.* That is, It ſhall never ſupply the room of Faith, Repentance, Regeneration, Holineſs, the loving of Chriſt above all, and God in him; ſo as to render theſe unneceſſary, or ſalvation poſſible without them. There is not one *Iota*, or tittle in the Bible, that ſo much as intimates an unregenerate perſon, an unbeliever, an impenitent, or unholy perſon ſhall be ſaved by Chriſts righteouſneſs; but enough to the contrary, every one knows, that hath the leaſt acquaintance with the Scriptures.

Vain man! what is Chriſt divided and divided againſt himſelf; Chriſt without againſt Chriſt within? His ſufferings on the Croſs and foregoing obedience againſt his Spirit and Government in the Soul? Did Chriſt die to take away the neceſſity of our being Chriſtians? And muſt his death ſerve, not to deſtroy ſin out of the world, but Chriſtianity? Who hath taught thee ſo wickedly to miſunderſtand the deſign of Chriſts dying? And when the Scripture ſo plainly tells thee, *That God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* And, *That he became the Author of eternal ſalvation to them that obey him*; yea,

Joh. 3. 16.

Heb. 5. 9.

yea, and *that he will come in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that know and obey him not.* What ſhould induce thee to think thou may'ſt be ſaved by him, whether thou believeſt and obeyeſt or no?

No, if ever thou think to ſee God, and be happy in him; thou muſt have a righteouſneſs in thee, reſembling *his*; the very product, the thing wrought in the work of regeneration. *If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doth righteouſneſs is born of him.* Whereupon follows the deſcription of the bleſſedneſs of ſuch righteous ones, in the beginning of the next Chapter,----*They are ſons--they ſhall be like* &c. So that in a word, without ſome ſight of God here, there's no ſeeing him hereafter; without ſome likeneſs to him now, none hereafter. And ſuch as are deſtitute of that heart-conformity to the Goſpel, wherein the Evangelical Righteouſneſs ſtands, are ſo far from it, that we may ſay to them, as our Saviour to the *Jews*, *Ye have neither heard his voice, nor ſeen his ſhape, i.e.* you have never had right notion, or any the leaſt true glimpſe of him; your hearts are wholly deſtitute of all Divine Impreſſions whatſoever. 1 Joh. 2. 29. Joh. 5. 37.

8. We may further infer, *from this qualification of the ſubject of bleſſedneſs, That righteouſneſs is no vain thing.* That is not in vain, that ends ſo well and hath ſo happy an iſſue at laſt. Scripture tells us, that 8. *Infer.*

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Prov. 10. 16. *the labour of the righteous tendeth to life:* And that we may underſtand it of their labour as they are righteous, we are more plainly told, that *righteouſneſs tendeth to life*; and that to them that ſow *righteouſneſs ſhall be a ſure reward.* That *the righteous ſhall ſhine as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father.*—*The righteous into eternal life.* And we here ſee, that *righteouſneſs* ends in the *bleſſed ſight of Gods glorious face, in being ſatisfied with the Divine likeneſs:* Fooliſh ſinners as juſtly upbraided that they ſpend their *labour for that which ſatisfie not*; take much pains to no purpoſe; ſuch are all the works of ſin, *toilſome*, fruitleſs; *what fruit had ye of thoſe things* (*viz.* which ye wrought when you were *free from righteouſneſs*) *whereof ye are now aſhamed*; *for the end of thoſe things is death.* But (it follows) *being now made free from ſin, and become ſervants to God* (which is paraphraſed above by *ſervants to righteouſneſs*) *ye have your fruit unto holineſs, and the end everlaſting life.* The fruit is a continual increaſe of holineſs, a growing more and more *like God*; till at laſt everlaſting life, ſatisfaction with his likeneſs, do Crown and conſummate all.

Ch. 11. 14. Ver. 18. Mat. 13. 43 Ch. 25. 46. Iſa. 55. 2. Rom. 6. 20, 21.

You have now what to anſwer to the Atheiſts profane Query, *What profit is it to ſerve God?* to what purpoſe to lead ſo ſtrict and preciſe a life? You may now ſee to what purpoſe it is; and whereunto godlineſs (which righteouſneſs here includes) is profitable (as having beſides what it intitles

ritles to here) *the promiſe of that life which is to come.*

There needs no more to diſcover any thing not to be vain (in as much as nothing can be ſaid to be ſo, but *in reference to an end*, as being good for nothing) than the eviction of theſe two things.

That it aims at a truly worthy and valuable end; and that its tendency thereto is direct and certain.

In the preſent caſe, both theſe are obvious enough at the firſt view.

For as to the former of them: All the world will agree, without diſputing the matter, that the laſt end of man (*i.e.* which he ultimately propounds to himſelf) is his *beſt good*; and that he can deſign no further good to himſelf, than *ſatisfaction*; nothing after or beyond that: And what can afford it, if the viſion and participation of the Divine Glory do not?

As to the latter: Beſides all that aſſurance given by Scripture-conſtitution to the righteous man, concerning his future reward, let the Conſciences be conſulted of the moſt beſotted ſinners, in any lucid interval, and they will give their ſuffrage (*Balaam*, that ſo earneſtly followed the reward of unrighteouſneſs, not excepted), that the way of righteouſneſs is that only likely way to happineſs; and would therefore deſire to die, at leaſt, the righteous mans death, and that their latter end ſhould be like his. So is wiſdom (I might call it righteouſneſs too;

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the wicked man is the Scripture-Fool, and the righteous the wiſe man) juſtified not by her children only, but by her enemies alſo.

And ſure, 'tis meet that ſhe ſhould be more openly juſtified by her Children, and that they learn to ſilence and repreſs thoſe miſ-giving thoughts; *Surely, I have waſhed my hands in vain*, &c. And *be ſtedfaſt, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as they know their labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

Pſal. 73.

1 Cor. 15.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

Two other Inferences, *from the Conſideration of the* ſeaſon *of this bleſſedneſs*: *The* former, *That in as much as this bleſſedneſs is not attained in this life, The preſent happineſs of Saints muſt in a great part conſiſt in hope. The* latter, *That great is the wiſdom and ſagacity of the righteous man, which waves a preſent temporary happineſs, and chuſes that which is diſtant and future.*

IN as much as the *ſeaſon* of this bleſſedneſs is not on this ſide the Grave; nor expected by Saints till they awake, we may further infer,

Ninthly, *That their happineſs in the mean time doth very much conſiſt in hope.* Or that hope muſt needs be of very great neceſſity and uſe to them in their preſent ſtate for their comfort and ſupport. It were not, otherwiſe, poſſible to ſubſiſt in the abſence and want of their higheſt good, while nothing in this lower world is, as to kind and nature, ſutable to their deſires, or makes any colourable overture to them of ſatisfaction 9. *Infer.*

faction and happineſs. Others (as the Pſalmiſt obſerves) *have their portion in this life*; that good, which as to the ſpecies and kind of it, is moſt grateful to them, is preſent, under view, within ſight; and (as the A-
Rom. 8. 24 poſtle) *Hope that is ſeen is not hope, for what a man ſeeth, why doth he yet hope for it?* But thoſe whoſe more refined ſpirits (having received the firſt-fruits of the holy Spirit of God) prompt them to groan after ſomething beyond time, and above this Sublunary Sphere; of them the Apoſtle there tells us, *that they are ſaved by hope.* They (as if he ſhould ſay) ſubſiſt by it; they were never able to hold out, were it not for their hope; and that an hope too, beyond this
1 Cor. 15. 19. life, as is the hope of a Chriſtian; *if in this life only we had hope in Chriſt*, &c. The hope of a Chriſtian, as ſuch, is ſutable to its productive cauſe; the reſurrection of Chriſt
1 Pet. 1. 3. from the dead; begotten to *a lively hope by the reſurrection*, &c. Thence is it the hope of a renewed, never dying life, the hope of a bleſſed immortality; whereof Chriſts reſurrection was a certain argument and pledg.

Indeed the new creature is, *ab origine*, and all along an *hoping creature*, both in its *primum* and its *porro eſſe*. 'Tis conceived, and formed, and nurſt up in hope. In its production and in its progreſs towards perfection, 'tis manifeſtly influenc't thereby. In the firſt return of the Soul to God, hope being then planted as a part of the holy gracious

gracious Nature, now manifeſtly diſcovers it ſelf, when the Soul begins to act, (as turning, after the reception of the Divine influence, is its act) hope inſinuates it ſelf into (or induces rather) that very act. *Returning* is not the act of a *deſpairing*, but *hoping* Soul. 'Tis God apprehended as reconcilable, that attracts and wins it; while he is look't upon as an implacable enemy, the Soul naturally ſhuns him, and comes not nigh, till drawn *with thoſe cords of a man, the bands of love.* While it ſays, *there is no hope*, it ſays with all (deſperately enough) *I have loved ſtrangers, and after them will I go.* But if *there be any hope in Iſrael concerning this thing.* If it can yet apprehend God willing to forgive, then *Let us make a Covenant*, &c. This preſently draws the hovering Soul into a cloſure and league with him. And thus is the union continued; *unſteadfaſtneſs in the Covenant of God*, is reſolved into this *not ſetting*, or fixing *of hope in him*, or (which amounts to the ſame) ſetting of hope in God is directed as a means to *ſteadfaſtneſs of ſpirit with him*, and *a keeping of his Covenant. Revolting* Souls are encouraged to *return* to the Lord upon this conſideration, that ſalvation is *hoped* for, in vain, from any other. The caſe being indeed the ſame, in all *after*-converſions as in the *firſt*. God, as *multiplying to pardon*, and ſtill retaining the ſame Name, *The Lord, the Lord gracious and merciful*, (which name in all the ſeverals that compoſe and make it up,

Hoſ. 11.

Jer. 2.

Ezr. 10. 2, 3.

Pſal. 78. 7, 13.

v. 10.

Jer. 3. 22, 23.

Exod. 34. 6.

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is in his Chriſt) invites back to him the backſliding ſinner, and renews his thoughts of returning. And ſo is he afterwards under the teachings of grace led on by hope, thorough the whole courſe of Religion towards the future glory. Grace appears, teaching ſinners *to deny ungodlineſs*, &c. and in the
Tit. 2. 11, 12, 13. *looking for the bleſſed hope, the glorious appearing of the great God*, &c. *So do they keep themſelves in the love of God, Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt unto eternal life.* Thus is the new creature formed in hope, and nouriſht in hope. And if its eye were upon pardon at firſt, 'tis more upon the promiſed glory afterwards. And yet that laſt end hath, in a degree, its attractive influence upon it, from the *firſt* formation of it; 'tis even then taught to deſign for glory. 'Tis *begotten to the lively hope*, (where though *hope* be taken objectively, as the apoſition ſhews of the following words, *to an inheritance*, yet the *act* is evidently connoted, for the *thing hoped for*, is meant under that notion, *as hoped for*): And its whole following courſe is an aiming at glory; a
Rom. 2. 7. *ſeeking glory, honour, immortality*, &c. Thus is the work of ſanctification carried on; *He*
1 Joh. 3. 3. *that hath this hope purifieth himſelf.* Thus are loſſes ſuſtained; *The ſpoiling of goods taken*
Heb. 10. 34. *joyfully, through the expectation of the better and enduring ſubſtance.* The moſt hazardous ſervices undertaken, even an Apoſtleſhip to a
Tit. 1. 1, 2. *deſpiſed Chriſt*; —*In the hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie hath promiſed.* All difficulties

difficulties encountred and overcome, while the *helmet is the hope of ſalvation.* All worldly evils are willingly endured; and all (ſuch) good things quitted and forſaken, for Chriſts ſake and his Elects. And if the queſtion be ask't, (as it was once of *Alexander*, when ſo frankly diſtributing his treaſures among his followers), *What do you reſerve for your ſelf?* The reſolved Chriſtian makes (with him) that ſhort and brave reply, *HOPE.* He lives upon things future and unſeen. The *objects* any one converſes with moſt, and in which his life is as it were bound up, are ſutable to the *ruling principle of life* in him. *They that are after the fleſh, do favour the things of the fleſh; they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.* The Principle of the fleſhly life is *Senſe*: The Principle of the ſpiritual life is *Faith. Senſe* is a mean, low, narrow, incomprehenſive principle, limited to a *point*, this Center of Earth, and τὸ νῦν (this now) of time; It can reach no *higher* than *terrene* things, nor *further* than *preſent* things: So brutiſh is the life of him that is led by it; wholly confined to *matter* and *time.* 1 Theſ. 5. 8. Rom. 8. 5.

But the righteous live by Faith. Their Faith *governs* and *maintains* their life. They ſteer not their courſe according to what they *ſee*; but according to what they *believe*: And their daily *ſuſtenance* is by the ſame kind of things. Their Faith influences not their actions only, but their comforts and enjoyments. They ſubſiſt by the things they believe, even

inviſible and eternal things: But it is by the intervening exerciſe of hope, whoſe object is the ſame. The Apoſtle having told us from
Hab. 2. 4. the Prophet, that the *juſt ſhall live by Faith*, preſently ſubjoins a deſcription of that Faith
Heb. 11. 1. they live by, *viz.* that it is *the ſubſtance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not ſeen*; it ſubſtantiates and reallizes, evidences and demonſtrates thoſe glorious objects, ſo far above the reach and ſphere of Senſe. It is conſtantly ſent out to forage in the inviſible Regions for the maintenance of this life: And thence fetches in the proviſions upon which *hope* feeds, to the ſtrengthening of the *heart*, the renewing of life and ſpirits. Our
2 Cor. 4. 16, 18. *inward man* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *is renewed day by day*; *while we look*, or take aim (which is next in the ſeries of the diſcourſe, for the intervening verſe is manifeſtly parenthetical) *not at the things that are ſeen, but at the things that are not ſeen*; *for the things that are ſeen are temporal, but the things that are not ſeen*
σκοπῦντων. *are eternal.* And the word here rendred [*look*] doth plainly ſignifie the act of *hope* as well as that of *faith*; for it doth not import a meer intuition or beholding, a taking notice or aſſenting only that there are ſuch things, but a deſigning or *ſcoping* at them (which is the very word) with an appropriative eye; as things that notwithſtanding their diſtance, or whatſoever imaginable difficulty, are hoped to be attained to and enjoyed. And here are evidently the diſtinct parts of Faith and Hope in this buſineſs; *Faith*,

upon

upon the authority and credit of the Divine Word and Promiſe, perſwades the heart that there is ſuch a glorious ſtate of things reſerved for Saints in general, (Faith can go no further, for the Word of Promiſe goes no further) and ſo ſerves inſtead of eyes in the Divine Light, to view thoſe glories; or it preſents them (as ſo many ſubſtantial reallities), demonſtrates them, ſubmits them to view, whence *Hope* reaches forth to them; contends againſt, and triumphs over all attending difficulties; and poſſeſſes them; gives the Soul an early anticipated fruition of them, for its preſent ſupport and relief. So that it *rejoices in the hope of the glory of God.* It might well therefore be ſaid, *I had fainted, if I had not believed*, (or who can expreſs how ſad my caſe had been, if I had not believed? for there is an elegant *Apoſiopeſis* in the Hebrew Text, the words [*I had fainted*] being ſupplied in the tranſlation. If I had not believed, what had become of me then? *q.d.*). In as much as faith feeds, as it were, thoſe hopes which more immediately the Lord makes uſe of, for the ſtrengthening his peoples hearts, as it is intimated in the following words, compared with *Pſal.* 31. 24. In the preſent caſe; *Faith* aſcertains the heart, of the truth of the Promiſes, ſo that thus the Soul ſtates the caſe to it ſelf; *Though I have not walkt to and fro in thoſe upper regions, nor taken a view of the heavenly inheritance; though I have not been in the third heavens, and ſeen the ineffable glory; yet the Goſpel-revelation, which hath*

Rom. 5. 2. Ch. 12. 12. Pſal. 27. 13 14.

brought life and immortality to light, the word of the eternal God, who hath told me this is the ſtate of things in the other world, cannot but be true; my faith may therefore be to me inſtead of eyes; and the Divine teſtimony muſt ſupply the place of light; both together give, methinks, a fair proſpect of thoſe far diſtant glorious objects which I have now in view. Now this awakens *hope*, and makes it revive, and run to embrace what Faith hath diſcovered in the Promiſe.

Tit. 1. 2. Pſal. 119. 49. ----*In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie hath promiſed.* 'Tis *the word of God that cauſes the Soul to hope*, (*i.e.* believed, for disbelieved, it ſignifies nothing with it), and that not only as it contains a *narration*, but a *promiſe* concerning the future eſtate. I may without much emotion of heart, hear from a Traveller the deſcription of a pleaſant Country, where I have not been; but if *the Lord of that Country* give me, beſides the account of it, an aſſurance of enjoying rich and ample poſſeſſions there, *this* preſently begets an *hope*, the pleaſure whereof would much relieve a preſent diſtreſſed eſtate; and which nothing, but that of actual poſſeſſion, can exceed. That 'tis not more ſo with us here, admits of no excuſe. Is God leſs to be believed than a man? Will we deny him the priviledg of being able to diſcover his mind, and the truth of things credibly, which we ordinarily allow to any one that is not a *convicted Liar*? Chriſt expects his Diſciples ſhould very confidently aſſure themſelves of the preparations made for them in another world, upon that very ground

ground alone, that he had not told them the contrary: *Let not your hearts be troubled, ye believe in God, believe alſo in me. In my Fathers houſe are many manſions, if it were not ſo, I would have told you. I go to prepare,* &c. Intimating to them, they ought to have that opinion of his plainneſs and ſincerity, as never to imagine he would have proſelyted them to a Religion that ſhould undo them in this world, if there were not a ſufficient recompence awaiting them in the other, but he would certainly have let them known the worſt of their caſe: Much more might he expect, they ſhould be confident upon his ſo often and expreſly telling them, that *ſo it is.* Joh. 14. 1, 2.

If his *ſilence* might be a ground of *hope*, much more his *word*. And ſurely ſo grounded an hope cannot but be conſolatory, and relieving in this ſad interval, till the *awaking hour.*

Laſtly, Since this bleſſedneſs of the righteous is, as to the ſeaſon of it, future, not expected till they awake, we may infer, *That 'tis great wiſdom and ſagacity that guides the righteous mans choice; while he waves a preſent and temporary, and chuſes this future expected bleſſedneſs.* 10. *Infer.*

'Tis true, that Philoſophy hath been wont to teach us, that *choice* or election hath no place about the *end*, becauſe that is but *one*, and *choice* always implies a *competition.* But that very reaſon evinces, that in our preſent *ſtate* and *caſe*, *choice* muſt have place about

the *end*. That Philoſophy might have ſuted better the ſtate of innocent *Adam*; when there was nothing to blind and bribe a mans judgment, or occaſion it to deliberate about the *ſupreme end*, (then it might be truly ſaid, *deliberation it ſelf was a defection*), nor to pervert and miſ-incline his will; and ſo its action, in *propoſing its end*, would be ſimple *intention*, not *choice*.

But ſo hath the Apoſtaſie and ſin of man blinded and befooled him, that he is at a loſs about nothing more than what is the *chief good*. And though S. *Auguſtine* reduce *Varro*'s 288 differring Sects about it to 12, that's enough to prove (but daily experience doth it more convincingly and ſadly) a *real*, though moſt *unjuſt* competition. Therefore a ſinner can never be bleſſed without chuſing his bleſſedneſs; and therein it highly concerns him to chuſe aright, and that a ſpirit of Wiſdom and Counſel guide his choice. While Man had not as yet fall'n, to deliberate whether he ſhould adhere to God or no, was a gradual declenſion, the very inchoation of his fall; but having fall'n, *neceſſity* makes that a *vertue* which was a *wickedneſs before*. There's no returning to God without *conſidering our ways*. The ſo much altered ſtate of the caſe, quite alters the nature of the things. It was a conſulting to *do evil*, before; now, to *do good*. And hence alſo, *chuſing the Lord to be our God*, becomes a *neceſſary duty*. Which is to make choice of this very bleſſedneſs, that conſiſts in the knowledg,

De Civit. Dei. lib. 19.

Joſh. 24.

ledg, likeneſs, and enjoyment of him. And now, in as much as this bleſſedneſs is not fully attained by the longing Soul, till time expire, and its eternity commence, here's a great diſcovery of that Wiſdom which guides this happy choice. There is great wiſdom in *proſpection*; in taking care of the future; and at how much the further diſtance one can provide, ſo much the greater reputation of wiſdom is juſtly acquired to him; yea, we ſeem to place the ſum of *practical wiſdom* in this one thing, while we agree to call it *providence*, under the contracted name of *prudence*. The Wiſe-man makes it at leaſt an evidence or part of wiſdom, when he tells us, *the prudent foreſeeth*, &c. The righteous man Prov. 22. 3. ſo far excells in this faculty, as that his eye looks thorow all the periods of time, and penetrates into eternity, recommends to the Soul a bleſſedneſs of that ſame ſtamp and alloy that will endure and laſt for ever. It will not content him to be happy for an *hour*, or for any ſpace that can have an end; after which it ſhall be poſſible to him, to look back and recount with himſelf how happy he was once: Nor is he much ſolicitous what his preſent ſtate be, if he can but find he is upon ſafe terms as to his future and eternal ſtate. *As for me*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, (he herein ſorts and ſevers himſelf from them whoſe portion was in this life), *I* [*ſhall*] *behold*--- *I* [*ſhall*] *be ſatisfied, when I awake*; he could not ſay it was well with him, but it ſhall be, *q. d.* Let the purblind, ſhort-ſighted Senſualiſt *Eſt haec non potuit dicere dixit tvit.*

embrace this preſent world, who can ſee no further: Let me have my portion in the world to come; may my Soul always lie open to the impreſſion of *the powers of the coming world*; and in *this*, ſo uſe every thing as to be *under the power of nothing*. What are the pleaſures of ſin, that are but for a ſeaſon; or what the ſufferings of this *now*, this moment of affliction, to the glory that ſhall be revealed to the exceeding and eternal glory. He conſiders, patient afflicted godlineſs will triumph at laſt, when riotous raging wickedneſs ſhall lament for ever. He may for a time weep and mourn, while the world rejoices; he may be ſorrowful, but
Joh. 16. 20 his ſorrow ſhall be turned into joy, and his
22. joy none ſhall take from him. Surely, *here is wiſdom*; this is the wiſdom that is from above, and tends thither. *This is to be wiſe unto ſalvation.* The righteous man is a judicious man; he hath in a *meaſure* that judgment (wherein the Apoſtle prays the *Philip-*
Phil. 1. 9, *pians* might *abound*) *to approve the things that*
10. *are excellent*, and accordingly to make his choice. This is a ſenſe (little thought of by the Author) wherein that ſober Speech of the voluptuous Philoſopher is moſt certain-
...icurus. ly true, *A man cannot live happily, without living wiſely.* No man ſhall ever enjoy the eternal pleaſures hereafter, that in this acquits not himſelf wiſely here, even *in this chuſing the better part, that ſhall never be taken from him.* In this the plain *righteous man* out-vies the greateſt Sophies, the Scribe, the Diſputer, the Politician, the prudent Mammoniſt,

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the facete Wit; who, in their ſeveral kinds, all think themſelves highly to have merited to be accounted wiſe: And that this point of wiſdom ſhould eſcape *their* notice, and be the principal thing with *him*, can be reſolved into nothing elſe but the *Divine good pleaſure*! In this contemplation our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is ſaid to have *rejoiced in Spirit*, (it even put his great comprehenſive Soul into an extaſie), *Father*, *I thank thee*, *Lord of* Luk. 10. 21 *heaven and earth*, *that thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and revealed them to babes*; *even ſo Father*, *becauſe it pleaſed thee!* Here was a thing fit to be reflected on, as a piece of Divine Royalty; a part, *worthy the Lord of heaven and earth!* And what ſerious ſpirit would it not amaze, to weigh and ponder this caſe awhile; to ſee men excelling in all other kinds of knowledg, ſo far excelled by thoſe they moſt contemn, in the higheſt point of wiſdom; ſuch as know how to ſearch into the abſtruſeſt Myſteries of *Nature*; that can unravel, or ſee through the moſt perplext intrigues of *State*; that know how to ſave their own Stake, and ſecure their private Intereſts in whatſoever times; yet ſo little ſeen (*often*, for not *many* wiſe) in the matters that concern an eternal felicity! It puts me in mind of (what I find obſerved by ſome) the *particular madneſs* (a *dementia quoad hoc*) as 'tis call'd; when perſons, in every thing elſe, capable of ſober rational diſcourſe, when you bring them to ſome one thing (that in reference to which they became

came diſtempered at firſt) they rave and are perfectly mad: How many that can manage a diſcourſe with great reaſon and judgment about other matters, who when you come to diſcourſe with them about the affairs of *practical godlineſs*, and which moſt directly tend to that *future ſtate of bleſſedneſs*, they are as at their wits end, know not what to ſay; they ſavour not thoſe things. Theſe are things not underſtood, *but by ſuch to whom it is given*: And ſurely that *given wiſdom* is the moſt excellent wiſdom. Sometimes God doth, as it were, ſo far gratifie the world, as to ſpeak their own language, and call them wiſe that affect to be called ſo, and that wiſdom which they would fain have go under that name; *Moſes* 'tis ſaid was skill'd in all
Act. 7. 22. the *wiſdom of Egypt*, &c. but at other times he expreſly calls thoſe wiſe men fools, and their wiſdom, folly and madneſs; or annexes ſome disgraceful adject for diſtinction ſake; or applies thoſe appellatives ironically and in manifeſt deriſion. No doubt, but any ſuch perſon as was repreſented in the Parable, would have thought himſelf to have done the part of a very wiſe man, in entertaining ſuch deliberation and reſolves, as we find he had there with himſelf: How ſtrange was
Luk. 12. that to his ears, *Thou fool, this night ſhall they require thy ſoul*, &c. Their wiſdom is ſometimes ſaid to be *fooliſh*; or elſe called the *wiſdom of the fleſh*, or *fleſhly wiſdom*; ſaid to be earthly, ſenſual, deviliſh; they are ſaid to be *wiſe to do evil*; while to do good they have

no

no underſtanding; they are brought ſometimes, as it were, upon the ſtage with their wiſdom, to be the matter of divine triumph; where is the wiſe? and that which they account *fooliſhneſs* is made to confound their *wiſdom.* And indeed do they deſerve to be thought wiſe, that are ſo buſily intent upon momentary trifles, and trifle with eternal concernments? that prefer vaniſhing ſhadows to the everlaſting glory? that follow lying vanities, and forſake their own mercies? Yea, will they not ceaſe to be wiſe in their own eyes alſo, when they ſee the iſſue, and reap the fruits of their fooliſh choice? when they find the happineſs they preferred before this eternal one is quite over; and nothing remains to them of it, but an afflictive remembrance? that the torment they were told would follow, is but now beginning; and without end? when they hear from the mouth of their impartial Judg; *Remember, you in your life time had your good things, and my faithful ſervants their evil; now they muſt be comforted, and you tormented?* when they are told, *you have received the conſolation; you were full, ye did laugh, now you muſt pine, and mourn, and weep?* Will they not then be as ready to befool themſelves, and ſay as they, *See thoſe (righteous ones) are they whom we ſometimes had in deriſion, and for a proverb of reproach; we fools counted their life madneſs, and that their end was without honour; but now, how are they numbred among the ſons of God, and their lot* Luk. 6. 24, 25. Wiſd. 5. 3, &c.

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is among the ſaints. They that were too wiſe before, to mind ſo mean a thing as *Religion* (*the world through wiſdom knew not God*; ſtrange wiſdom!), that could ſo *wiſely* baffle Conſcience, and put fallacies upon their own Souls; that had ſo ingenious ſhifts to elude a conviction, and divert any ſerious thought from faſtening upon their ſpirits; that were wont ſo *ſlily* to jeer holineſs, ſeemed as they meant to laugh Religion out of countenance; * they will now know, that a *circumſpect walking*, a *faithful redeeming of time*, and *improving it in order to eternity*, was to do, not *as fools*, but *as wiſe*; and begin to think of themſelves, now at laſt, as all wiſe and ſober men thought of them before.

1 Cor. 1.

* *Folly is joy to him that is deſtitute of wiſdom.* Prov. 15.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

The ſecond general Head of the improvement or uſe of the Doctrine propounded from the Text, containing certain Rules or Preſcriptions of Duty connatural thereto.

Rule 1. *That we ſettle in our minds the true notion of this bleſſedneſs.*

Rule 2. *That we compare the temper of our own ſpirits with it, and labour thence to diſcern whether we may lay claim to it or no.*

THus far we have the account of the *Truths* to be conſidered and weigh'd, that have dependence on the Doctrine of the Text.

Next follow the Duties to be practis'd and done in reference thereto, which I ſhall lay down in the enſuing *Rules* or Preſcriptions.

1. *That we admit and ſettle the diſtinct notion of this bleſſedneſs in our minds and judgments.* That we fix in our own Souls, apprehenſions agreeable to the account this Scripture hath given us of it. This is a Coun- 1. *Rule.*

ſel

ſel leading and introductive to the reſt; and which if it obtain with us, will have a general influence upon the whole courſe of that *practice* which the Doctrine already opened calls for. As our apprehenſions of this bleſſedneſs are more diſtinct and clear, it may be expected more powerfully to command our hearts and lives. Hence it is, in great part, the ſpirits and converſations of Chriſtians have ſo little *ſavour* and *appearance* of Heaven in them. We reſt in ſome general and confuſed notion of it, in which there is little either of efficacy or pleaſure; we deſcend not into a particular inquiry and conſideration what it is. Our thoughts of it are gloomy and obſcure; and hence is our ſpirit naturally liſtleſs and indifferent towards it; and rather contents it ſelf to ſit ſtill in a Region all lightſom round about, and among objects it hath ſome preſent acquaintance with, than venture it ſelf forth as into a new world which it knows but little of. And hence our lives are low and carnal; they look not as though we were ſeeking the heavenly Country; and indeed, who can be in good earneſt in ſeeking after an unknown ſtate? This is owing to our negligence and infidelity. The bleſſed God hath not been ſhy and reſerv'd; hath not hidden or concealed from us the glory of the other world; nor lock't up Heaven to us; nor left us to the uncertain gueſſes of our own imagination, the wild fictions of an unguided phanſie; which would have created

us a poetical heaven only, and have mock't us with falſe *Elyſiums*: But, though much be yet within the vail, he hath been liberal in his diſcoveries to us. Life and immortality are brought to light in the Goſpel. The future bleſſedneſs (though ſome refined Heathens have had near gueſſes at it) is certainly apprehenſible by the meaſure only of Gods revelation of it: For who can determine, with certainty, of the effects of Divine *good pleaſure*, (*'tis your Fathers good pleaſure to give you a Kingdom*)? Who can tell before-hand, what ſo free and boundleſs goodneſs will do, further than as he himſelf diſcovers it? The *diſcovery* is as free as the *donation*. *The things that eye hath not* 1 Cor. 2. 9. *ſeen, and ear not heard, and which have not entred into the heart of man, God hath revealed to us by his Spirit*: And it follows, v. 12. *We have received the Spirit of God, that we might know the things freely given us of God.* The Spirit is both the principle of the *external revelation*, as having inſpired the Scriptures which foreſhew this glory, and of the *internal revelation* alſo, to enlighten blind minds that would otherwiſe (μυωπάζον) never be able to diſcover things at ſo great a diſtance, *ſee afar off*: Therefore called the *Spirit of wiſdom and revelation*, by which *the eyes of the underſtanding are enlightned to* Eph. 1. 17. *know the hope of that calling, and the riches of the glory of his inheritance* [*among*] *the Saints*, (as the ἐν there is moſt fitly to be rendred).

But

But this *internal* diſcovery is made by the mediation and interveniency of the *external*: Therefore having that before our eyes we are to apply our minds to the ſtudy and conſideration of it; and in that way to expect the free illumination of the holy Spirit. In the mean time we muſt charge our ignorance, and the darkneſs of our cloudy thoughts, touching theſe things; upon our careleſneſs, that we do not attend; or our incredulity, that we will not believe what God hath revealed concerning them: 'Tis therefore a dutiful attention, and reverential Faith that muſt ſettle and fix the notion of this bleſſedneſs. If we will not *regard* nor *give credit* to what God hath diſcovered concerning it, we may ſit ſtill in a torpid diſconſolate darkneſs, which we our ſelves are the Authors of, or (which is no leſs pernicious) compaſs our ſelves with ſparks beaten out of our own Forge, walk in the light of our own fire, cheat our Souls with the fond dream of an imagined Heaven, no where to be found, till we at length lie down in ſorrow. How perverſe are the imaginations of men in this (as in reference to the *way*, ſo) in reſpect of the *end* alſo; for as they take upon them to fancy another *way* to happineſs quite beſides and againſt the plain word of God; ſo do they imagine to themſelves another kind of happineſs, ſuch as ſhall gratifie only their ſenſual deſires; a *Mahometan* (indeed a Fools) Paradiſe; or at beſt, 'tis but a negative Heaven; they many times enter-

entertain in their thoughts (of which their ſenſe too is the only meaſure) a ſtate wherein nothing ſhall offend or incommodate the fleſh; in which they ſhall not hunger, or thirſt, or feel want; and when they have thus ſtated the matter in their own thoughts, we cannot beat them out of it, but that they *deſire to go to heaven* (*viz.* the heaven of their own making); when, did they conceive it *truly* and *fully*, they would find their hearts to abhor from it, even as hell it ſelf.

Therefore here we ſhould exerciſe an authority over our ſelves; and awaken Conſcience to its proper work and buſineſs; and demand of it, *Is it not reaſonable theſe divine diſcoveries ſhould take place with me?* hath not God ſpoken plainly enough? why ſhould my heart any longer hang in doubt with me, or look wiſhly towards future glory, as if it were an uncouth thing? or is it reaſonable to confront my own imaginations to his diſcoveries? Charge conſcience with the duty it owes to God in ſuch a caſe; and let his revelations be received with the reverence and reſignation which they challenge; and *in them* ſtudy and contemplate the bleſſedneſs of awakened Souls, till you have agreed with your ſelf fully how to conceive it. Run over every part of it in your thoughts; view the ſeveral divine excellencies which you are hereafter to ſee and imitate; and think what every thing will contribute to the ſatisfaction and contentment of your ſpirits. This is a matter of unſpeakable conſequence.

Therefore, to be as clear as is poſſible, you may digeſt what is recommended to you in this *Rule*, into theſe more particular directions.

1. *Reſolve with your ſelves, to make the divine revelation of this bleſſedneſs the prime meaſure and reaſon of all your apprehenſions concerning it.* Fix that purpoſe in your own hearts, ſo to order all your conceptions about it, that when you demand of your ſelves, What do I conceive of the future bleſſedneſs? and why do I conceive ſo? the *divine revelation* may anſwer both the queſtions. I apprehend what God hath revealed, and becauſe he hath ſo revealed. The Lord of Heaven ſure beſt underſtands it; and can beſt help us to the underſtanding of it. If it be Heb. 11. 3. ſaid of the *origine of this world*, νοέομεν, it may much more be ſaid of the *ſtate of the other*, *we underſtand it by faith*: That muſt inform and perfect our intellectuals in this matter.

2. *Therefore, reject and ſever from the notion of this bleſſedneſs, whatſoever is alien to the account Scripture gives us of it.* Think not that ſenſual pleaſure, that a liberty of ſinning, that an exemption from the divine dominion, diſtance and eſtrangedneſs from God (which by nature you wickedly affect) can have any ingrediency into (or conſiſtency with) this ſtate of bleſſedneſs.

3. *Gather up into it whatſoever you can find by the Scripture-diſcovery to appertain or belong thereto.* Let your notion of it be to your utter-

uttermoſt, not only *true*, but *comprehenſive* and *full*, and as particular and poſitive, as Gods revelation will warrant: Eſpecially remember, 'tis a ſpiritual bleſſedneſs, that conſiſts in the refining and perfecting of your ſpirits by the viſion and likeneſs of the holy God and the *ſatisfying* of them thereby for ever.

4. *Get the notion of this bleſſedneſs deeply imprinted in your minds; ſo as to abide with you, that you may not be always at a loſs, and change your apprehenſions every time you come to think of it.* Let a once well formed *Idea*, a clear full ſtate of it be *preſerv'd* entire, and be (as a lively image) always before your eyes, which you may readily view upon all occaſions.

2. *That having well fixed the notion of this bleſſedneſs in your minds, you ſeriouſly reflect upon your ſelf, and compare the temper of your ſpirit with it; that you may find out, how it is affected thereto; and thence judg in what likelihood you are of enjoying it.* 2. *Rule.*

The general averſion of mens ſpirits to this ſo neceſſary work of *ſelf-reflection*, is one of the moſt deplorable Symptoms of lapſed degenerated humanity: The wickedneſs that hath over-ſpread the nature of man; and a ſecret *conſciouſneſs* and *miſgiving* hath made men afraid of themſelves, and ſtudiouſly to decline all acquaintance with their own Souls; to ſhun themſelves as *Ghoſts* and *Spectres*; they cannot endure to *appear*

to themſelves: You can hardly impoſe a ſeverer task upon a wicked man, than to go retire an hour or two, and commune with himſelf; he knows not how to *face his own thoughts:* His own Soul is a Devil to him, (as indeed it will be in hell, the moſt frightful tormenting Devil). Yet, what *power* is there in man, more excellent, more appropriate to reaſonable nature, than that of *reflecting*, of turning his thoughts upon himſelf? Senſe muſt here confeſs it ſelf out-done. The eye that ſees other objects cannot ſee it ſelf: But the mind, a *rational Sun*, can not only project its beams, but revert them; make its thoughts turn inward. It can ſee its own face, contemplate it ſelf. And how uſeful an endowment is this to the nature of man? If he err, he might perpetuate his error and wander infinitely, if he had not this ſelf-reflecting power; and if he do well, never know without it the comfort of a rational ſelf-approbation: Which comfort Paganiſh Morality hath valued ſo highly, as to account it did aſſociate a man with the Inhabitants of Heaven and make him lead his life as among the gods (as their Pagan language is); though the name of this reflecting power [*Conſcience*], they were leſs acquainted with; the thing it ſelf they reckon'd as a kind of *indwelling Deity*, (as may be ſeen at large in thoſe Diſcourſes of *Maximus Tyrius*, and *Apuleius*, both upon the ſame ſubject, *concerning the god of Socrates*): And another giving this

Precept,

Precept, "*Familiarize thy self with the gods*, adds, "and this shalt thou do, if thou bear "thy mind becomingly towards them, being "well pleased with the things they give, and "doing the things that may please thy *Dæmon* "or *Genius*, whom (saith he) the most high "God (which they mean by *Jupiter*) hath "put into every man, as a derivation or ex-"traction from himself (ἀπόσπασμα) to be "his president and guide; *viz.* every ones "own mind and reason.

Συζῆν θεοῖς Συζῆ δὲ θεοῖς ὁ συνεχῶς δοικνῦς ἑαυτοῖς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ψυχὴν, ἀρεσκομένην μὲν τοῖς ἀπονεμομένοις: ποιοῦσαν —οὗτος δὲ δὲ ὅσα βούλεται ὁ δαίμων, ὃν ἑκάστω προστάτην, &c. ἔστιν ἑκάστου νοῦς καὶ λόγος. *Mar. Anton. Lib.* 5.

And this *mind* or *reason* in that notion of it, as we *approve* our selves to it, and *study* to please it, is the same thing we intend by the name of *Conscience*.

And how high account they had of this work of *self-reflection*, may appear in that they entituled, the Oracle to that document *Know thy self*, esteeming it above human discovery, and that it could have no lower than a divine Original; therefore consecrating and writing it up in Golden Characters in their *Delphick* Temple (as *Pliny* informs * us) for an heavenly-inspired dictate.

E cœlo descendit, γνῶθι σεαυτόν.

* *Hist. Mundi*, The wisdom an significancy of which Dedication *Plato* also (in *Alcibiad.* 1. takes notice of.

Among Christians that enjoy the benefit of the Gospel-revelation, in which men may be-

behold themselves, as one may *his natural face in a glass*, how highly should this self-knowledg be prized, and how fully attained? The Gospel discovers, at the same time, the ugly deformities of a mans Soul and the means of attaining a true spiritual comliness; Yea it is, it self, the instrument of impressing the divine image and glory upon mens spirits; which when it is in any measure *done*, they become most sociable and conversable with themselves; and when 'tis but *in doing*, it so convincingly and with so piercing energy, lays open the very thoughts of mens hearts, so thoroughly rips up and dissects the Soul, so directly turns, and strictly holds a mans eye intent upon himself; so powerfully urges and obliges the sinner to mind and study his own Soul; that, where it hath effected any thing, been any way operative upon mens spirits, *they* are certainly supposed to be in a good measure acquainted with themselves, whatever others are. Therefore the Apostle bids the *Corinthians*, if they desire a proof of the *power* and *truth* of his ministery, to consult themselves, [*examine your selves*], and presently subjoins, *know ye not your own selves?* intimating, it was an unsupposable thing they should be ignorant; What, Christians and not know your selves? Can you have been under the Gospel so long, and be strangers to your selves? none can think it. Sure 'tis a most reproachful thing, a thing full of ignominy and scandal, that a man should name himself a Christian, and yet be under gross

Heb. 4. 12.

2 Cor. 13. 5.

gross ignorance, touching the temper and bent of his own Soul: It signifies, that such a one understands little of the design and tendency of the very Religion he pretends to be of, that he was a Christian by meer chance, that he took up and continues his profession in a dream. Christianity aims at nothing, it gets a man nothing, if it do not procure him a better spirit? 'tis an empty insignificant thing, it hath no design in it at all, if it do not design this. It pretends to nothing else. It doth not offer men secular advantages, emoluments, honours; it hath no such aim, to make men, in that sense, rich, or great, or honourable, but to make them *holy*, and fit them for God. He therefore loses all his labour and reward, and shews himself a vain trifler in the matters of Religion, *that makes not this the scope and mark of his Christian profession and practice*; and herein he can do nothing without a constant self-inspection. As it therefore highly *concerns*, it well *becomes* a Christian under the Gospel, to be in a continual observation and study of himself; that he may know to what purpose he is a Christian; and take notice, what (or whether any) good impressions be yet made upon his spirit; whether he gain any thing by his Religion. And if a man enter upon an enquiry into himself, what more important question can he put than this, *In what posture am I as to my last and chief end?* how is my spirit framed towards it? This is the intendment and business of the Gospel, *to fit Souls for blessedness:*

And therefore, if I would enquire, What am I the better for the Goſpel? this is the ſenſe and meaning of that very queſtion, Is my Soul wrought by it to any better diſpoſition for bleſſedneſs? Upon which the reſolution of this depends, *am I ever likely to enjoy it, yea or no?* That which may make any heart, not deplorably ſtupid, ſhake and tremble, that ſuch a thing ſhould be drawn into queſtion; but the caſe with the moſt requires it, and it muſt be ſo. 'Tis that therefore I would fain here *awaken Souls* to, and *aſſiſt them* in; that is, propound ſomething (in purſuance of the preſent direction) which might both *awaken them* to move this great queſtion, and *help them* in diſcuſſing it: Both which will be done in ſhewing the *importance* of this latter *ultimate queſtion in it ſelf*, and then the *ſubſerviency of the former ſubordinate one, towards the deciding it.* Theſe two things therefore I ſhall a little ſtay upon.

1. To ſhew and urge the requiſiteneſs of debating with our ſelves, the likelihood, or hopefulneſs of our enjoying this bleſſedneſs.

2. To diſcover that the *preſent habitude*, or diſpoſedneſs of our ſpirits to it, is a very proper apt medium, whereby to judg thereof.

Firſt, As to the former of theſe: Methinks our buſineſs ſhould do it ſelf; and that the very mention of ſuch a bleſſedneſs, ſhould *naturally* prompt Souls to bethink themſelves, *doth it belong to me? have I any thing to do with*

with it? Methinks every one that hears of it ſhould be beforehand with me, and prevent me here. Where is that ſtupid Soul, that reckons it an indifferent thing to attain this bleſſed ſtate, or falls ſhort of it? When thou heareſt this is the common expectation of Saints, *to behold the face of God, and be ſatisfi'd with his likeneſs, when they awake*; Canſt thou forbear to ſay with thy ſelf, and what ſhall become of me when I awake? what kind of awaking ſhall I have? ſhall I awake amidſt the beams of glory, or flames of wrath? If thou canſt be perſwaded to think this no matter of indifferency, then ſtir up thy drowſie Soul to a ſerious inquiry, how 'tis likely to fare with thee for ever; and to that purpoſe put thy conſcience to it, to give a free, ſincere anſwer to theſe few Queries.

1. Canſt thou ſay, thou art already *certain* of thy eternal bleſſedneſs? Art thou ſo ſure, that thou need'ſt not enquire? I know not who thou art that now readeſt theſe lines, and therefore cannot judg of thy confidence, whether it be right or wrong; only that thou may'ſt not anſwer too haſtily, conſider a little, that *certainty of ſalvation is no common thing*; not among (I ſpeak you ſee of ſubjective certainty) the heirs of ſalvation themſelves. How many of Gods holy ones, that cannot ſay they are *certain*; yea how few that can ſay they are? That exhortation to a Church of Saints, *Work out your ſalvation with fear and trembling*, (they of whom he expreſſeth ſuch confidence, *Chap.* 1. 6. over whom Phil. 2. 12.

whom he ſo glories, *Chap.* 4. 1.), implies this to be no common thing; ſo doth Chriſts advice to his Diſciples, *Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate*; and St. *Peter's* to the ſcattered *Jews* (that he ſaith had obtained *like pretious faith*, &c.), *give diligence to make your calling and election ſure*; with many more paſſages of like import. Yea, how full is the Scripture of the complaints of *ſuch* crying out of broken bones, of feſtering wounds, of diſtraction by divine terrors. Now what ſhall we ſay in this caſe, when ſo eminent Saints have left us Records of the diſtreſſes and agonies of their ſpirits, under the apprehended diſpleaſure of God: May it not occaſion us, to ſuſpend a while and conſider? have we much more reaſon to be confident than they? and do we know none that lead ſtricter and more holy lives than we, that are yet in the dark, and at a loſs in judging their ſpiritual ſtates? I will not ſay, that we *muſt* therefore think our ſelves *bound* to doubt, becauſe another poſſibly better than we doth ſo. Unknown accidents may much vary the caſes. But who would not think, that reaſon and modeſty had quite forſaken the world, to hear (where the odds is ſo vaſtly great) the vain boaſts of the looſe generality, compared with the humble ſolicitous doubts of many ſerious knowing Chriſtians? To ſee *ſuch* trembling about their ſoul-concernments, who have walkt with God, and ſerved him long in prayers and tears? when multitudes, that have nothing where-

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on to bottom a confidence but *Pride* and *Ignorance*, shall pretend themselves certain! If drawing breath a while, thou wilt suspect thou have reason not to be peremptory in thy confidence; thou wilt sure think thy self concern'd to enquire further. Urge thy Soul then with this question again and again, Art thou yet certain, yea or no?

2. Is it a comfortable state to be *uncertain*, or to have before thee, apparent grounds of a rational and just doubt? For causeless doubts may sooner vanish, when their causelessness is once discovered; and so they are less likely to keep a person that is capable of understanding his own case, under a stated discomfort. But I suppose thee, in order to the answering the foregoing Query, to have in some measure considered the case; and that, with a preponderating apprehension of danger in it, thou returnest it *uncertain*. Uncertain man! And what, wilt thou remain uncertain? wilt thou sit still so, till thou perish? shall thy life hang in doubt, and thy Soul be in jeopardy every hour, till the everlasting flames resolve the doubt, and put the matter out of question with thee? What course canst thou apply thy self to, but to enquire and search further into thy own state, to avoid the torture of thy own fears, the pangs and dreadful expectations of a palpitating misgiving heart: 'Tis true, that inquisitive diligent doubtfulness hath hope and comfort in it. But doubtfulness, joined with a resolution of casting off all further care, is utterly

terly deſperate and diſconſolate; what remains to thee, in that caſe, but *a fearful looking for of fiery indignation*? how canſt thou paſs an hour in peace, while thou apprehendeſt it unlikely, thou ſee the face, and be ſatisfied with the image of God; do not thy own thoughts repreſent to thee, the amazing ſights, the horrid images which ſhall for ever entertain and poſſeſs thy Soul? Art thou not daily haunted with Divine Horrors? when thou layeſt at night, thy *bed ſhall refreſh thee*, art thou not *terrified with dreams and affrighted with viſions?* Doſt thou not ſay in the morning, would to God it were evening; and in the evening, ſay, would to God it were morning: And while thou knoweſt not what elſe to do, meditate only changes inſtead of remedies. Or if thou find no ſuch trouble invading thy mind, let me further ask:

3. Is it *reaſonable* to be ſecure in ſuch a ſtate of uncertainty! Debate this matter a little while with thy ſelf. Is it thy *reaſon*, or thy *ſloth* that makes thee ſit ſtill and forbear to look into thy ſpiritual affairs? Is it any *rational conſideration*, or not rather the *meer indiſpoſition* of a Soul affraid to know its own ſtate, that ſuſpends thee from inquiring? what haſt thou to ſay, that looks like a reaſon? Is it, that it will diſturb thy thoughts, interrupt thy pleaſures, fill thee with anxious cares and fears, which thou art as loath to admit, as burning coals into thy boſom? Is it, that thou canſt not endure to look upon

upon ſo dreadful an object, as *the appearing danger*, or *poſſibility of thy being miſerable to eternity?* And art thou therefore reſolved, to ſhut thine eyes, and cry peace, peace? This is to avoid a preſent inconvenience, by an eternal miſchief, (a groſs over-ſtraining the Paradox!); for avoiding the preſent fear of Hell to run into it; as if becauſe a man cannot bear the thoughts of dying, he ſhould preſently cut his own throat. Vain man! canſt thou not bear the thoughts of eternal miſery; how wilt thou bear the thing? And how long-liv'd doſt thou think that peace ſhall be, that thou purchaſeſt upon ſo dear and hard terms? canſt thou promiſe thy ſelf an hour? may'ſt thou not loſe thy purchaſe and price together, the next moment? canſt thou *defer* thy miſery by *forgetting* it; or will thy judgment linger, and thy damnation ſlumber, while thou ſecurely lingereſt and ſlumbreſt? canſt thou wink Hell into nothing; and put it out of *being*, by putting it out of thy *thoughts*? Alas man! open thy eyes when thou wilt, thou ſhalt find, thou haſt not bettered thy caſe by having kept them faſt cloſed. The bitterneſs of death is not yet paſt. The horrid image is ſtill before thee. This is not a phanſied evil, which a man may dream himſelf into, and (*eâdem operâ*) with as little difficulty, dream himſelf out of it again: No, thy caſe is miſerable and dangerous when thou compoſeſt thy ſelf to ſleep; if thou awakeſt, thou wilt find it ſtill the ſame; only thou didſt not

not apprehend it before, for then thou wouldſt not have ſlept: As the Drunkard, that kills a man and after falls aſleep in his drunken fit, he awakes and underſtands his wretched caſe. Would his ſleeping on, till the Officers arreſt had awak't him, have mended the matter with him?

But thou wilt poſſibly ſay, Is it not better, here, to have a little quiet now, than to be miſerable by *ſad thoughts here*, and miſerable by *actual ſuffering hereafter* too? Is not one death enough? why ſhould one kill himſelf ſo often over; and haſten miſery, as if it came on too ſlowly?

Better, man? an hard choice. Suppoſing thou art to be *eternally* miſerable, (if thou underſtand'ſt that word *eternity*), the good or evil of this little inch of time, will ſignifie ſo little with thee, as hardly to weigh any thing in the Scale of a rational judgment. But what, art thou now *dreaming*, while thou thus reaſoneſt? Doſt thou yet no better underſtand thy caſe? Art thou not under the Goſpel? Is it not the day of thy hope, and of the Lords grace and patience towards thee? It was ſaid, that ſleeping would not better thy caſe; but it was not ſaid, that *awaking* would not; but all that is here ſaid, is deſigned to the awakening of thee, that thou may'ſt know thy caſe, and endeavour a redreſs. Doſt thou think any man in his ſober wits, would take all this pains thus to reaſon with thee, if that were the acknowledged and agreed ſtate of thy caſe,

caſe, that it were already taken for granted thou muſt periſh? We might as well go preach to Devils, and carry down the Goſpel into Hell. But doſt thou think the holy merciful God ſent his Son and his Miniſters to mock men; and to treat with them about their eternal concernments, when there is no hope? Were that thy caſe, thou hadſt as good a pretence as the Devil had, to complain of *being tormented before thy time.* But if thou be not wilfully perverſe, in miſtaking the matter we are reaſoning about, thou may'ſt underſtand, thy reaſon is here appealed to *in this*, Whether having ſo fair hopes before thee, as the Goſpel gives, of this bleſſedneſs we are diſcourſing of, it be reaſonable from the apprehenſion of a *meer poſſibility* of miſcarrying, (which can only be through thy wilful ſecurity and neglect), to give up thy ſelf to a ſupine negligence, and indulge that ſecurity which is ſo ſure to ruin thee, and exchange a *poſſible, hoped Heaven*, for a *certain Hell*; or whether rather it be not reaſonable, to ſtir up thy Soul to conſider in what poſture thou art, towards the attainment of this bleſſedneſs; that thou may'ſt accordingly ſteer thy courſe in order to it? If an Accuſation, or a Diſeaſe do threaten thy life; or a ſuſpected flaw thy Title to thy Eſtate, would'ſt thou not think it reaſonable to enquire into thy caſe? And is it not much more *deſirable*, In a matter of this conſequence to be at ſome certainty? and *prudent*, to endeavour it, if it

it may poſſibly be attained? Whence let me further ask:

4. *Canſt thou pretend it to be impoſſible?* Hath God left thee under a *neceſſitated ignorance*, in this matter? or denied thee *ſufficient means* of knowing how 'tis with thee in reſpect of thy ſpiritual Eſtate? Though he have not given thee a *Liſt*, or told thee the Number or Names of his ſanctified ones, yet hath he not ſufficiently deſcribed the Perſons and given thee Characters by which they may be known? And hath he not furniſht thee with a *ſelf-reflecting power*, by which thou art enabled to look into thy ſelf, and diſcern whether thou be of them or no? Doth he not offer and afford to ſerious diligent Souls, the aſſiſting light of his bleſſed Spirit to guide and ſucceed the enquiry? And if thou find it difficult to come to a ſpeedy clear iſſue, to make a preſent certain judgment of thy caſe; ought not that to engage thee to a patient continued diligence, rather than in a raſh deſpairing madneſs, to deſiſt and caſt off all? In as much as the difficulty, though great, is not inſuperable; and the neceſſity and advantage incomparably greater. And (though divers other things do confeſſedly fall in) the principal difficulty lies in thy *averſation* and *unwillingneſs*: Thou art not put to traverſe the Creation, to climb Heaven, or dig through the Earth; but thy work lies nigh thee, in thy own heart and ſpirit, and what is ſo nigh, or ſhould be ſo familiar to thee,

as

as thy ſelf? 'Tis but caſting thy eye upon thy own Soul, to diſcern which way 'tis inclin'd and bent, thou art urged to. Which is that we propounded next to diſcover: *viz.*

Secondly, *That we are to judg of the hopefulneſs of our enjoying this bleſſedneſs, by the preſent habitude or diſpoſedneſs of our ſpirits thereto.* For what is that righteouſneſs which qualifies for it, but the impreſs of the Goſpel upon the minds and hearts of men? The *Goſpel-revelation* is the only *Rule* and *Meaſure* of that righteouſneſs: It muſt therefore conſiſt in *conformity thereto.* And look to the frame and deſign of the Goſpel-revelation, and what doth ſo directly correſpond to it, as that very *habitude* and *diſpoſedneſs of ſpirit* for this bleſſedneſs whereof we ſpeak? Nothing ſo anſwers the Goſpel, as a propenſion of heart towards God (gratifi'd in part now, and increaſing till it find a full ſatisfaction), a deſire of knowing him and of being like him. 'Tis the whole deſign of the Goſpel, which reveals his glory in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, to work and form the ſpirits of men to this. They therefore whoſe ſpirits are thus wrought and framed, are *righteous* by the *Goſpel-meaſure*, and by *that righteouſneſs* are evidently *intituled* and *fitted* for this bleſſedneſs. Yea, that righteouſneſs hath in it (or rather is) the Elements, the firſt Principles, the Seed of this bleſſedneſs. There can therefore be no ſurer *Rule* or *Mark* whereby to

judg our ſtates, whether we have to do with this bleſſedneſs, may expect it yea or no, than *this*.

How ſtand we affected towards it; in what diſpoſition are our hearts thereto? Thoſe fruits of righteouſneſs, by which the Soul is qualified to appear without offence in the day of Chriſt; the ſeveral graces of the ſanctifying Spirit; are nothing elſe but ſo many holy Principles, all diſpoſing the Soul towards this bleſſedneſs, and the way to it; *mortification*, *ſelf-denial*, and *godly ſorrow*, take it off from other objects, the *world*, *ſelf*, and *ſin*; *repentance* (that part of it which reſpects God) turns the courſe of its motion towards God the *end*; *faith* directs it through Chriſt the *way*; *love* makes it move freely; *deſire*, earneſtly; *joy*, pleaſantly; *hope*, confidently; *humility*, evenly; *fear*, circumſpectly; *patience*, conſtantly and perſeveringly. All conſpire to give the Soul a right diſpoſition towards this bleſſedneſs. The reſult of them all is *heavenlineſs*, an *heavenly temper of ſpirit*. For they all (one way or other), as ſo many Lines and Rayes, have reſpect to a *bleſſedneſs in God* (which is heaven) as the *point* at which they aim; and (the *cuſpis*) the *point* in which they meet, in order to the touching of that *objective point*, is *heavenlineſs*. This is the ultimate and immediate diſpoſition of heart for this bleſſedneſs; the reſult (the *terminus productus*) of the whole work of righteouſneſs in the Soul; by which 'tis ſaid to be as it were,

were, *nata ad gloriam*, begotten to the eternal inheritance. Concerning this therefore chiefly inſtitute thy enquiry. Demand of thy ſelf, Is my Soul yet made *heavenly*, bent upon eternal bleſſedneſs, or no? And here thou mayeſt eaſily apprehend, of how great concernment it is, to have the right notion of Heaven, or future bleſſedneſs, as was urged under the *foregoing Rule*. For if thou take for it another thing, thou miſſeſt thy mark and art quite beſide thy buſineſs: But if thou retain a right and ſcriptural ſtate and notion of it, the Rule thou art to judg by is *ſure, They ſhall have Heaven whoſe hearts are intent upon it, and framed to it.* Scripture is every where pregnant and full of this.

The Apoſtle plainly intimates, *this will be the Rule of Gods final Judgment.* (Certainly, it cannot be unſafe for us to judg our ſelves by the ſame Rule). He tells us, *when God ſhall judg every one according to his works* (the great buſineſs of the judgment-day), *eternal life* ſhall be the portion of them, *who by patient continuance in well-doing, ſought glory, and honour, and immortality,* (which are but other expreſſions of the ſame thing): What can be more plain? *They ſhall have eternal life and glory that ſeek it*; whoſe hearts are towards it. Again, ſpeaking of true Chriſtians, Περιτομὴ, (*i.e.* in a way of contradiſtinction from *Pſeudo*-Chriſtians, ſuch as he ſaith were enemies of the Croſs), he gives us (among other) this brand of Rom. 2. 6, 7.

theſe latter, that *they did mind earthly things*, and tells us, *their end would be deſtruction*; but gives us this oppoſite Character of the other, *our converſation is in heaven*; our trade and buſineſs, our daily negotiations (as well as the priviledges of our Citizenſhip) lie there (as his expreſſion imports), and thence intimates the oppoſite *end* of *ſuch*, *whence we look for a* [*Saviour*], not *deſtruction*, but *ſalvation*. And in the ſame Context of Scripture where, *they that are riſen with Chriſt*, and *who ſhall appear with him in glory*, are requir'd *to ſet their* [*mind*] *on things above*, *not on things on the earth*: That we may underſtand this, not to be their *duty* only, but their *character*, we are immediately told, they who follow not this counſel, and *mortifie not their earthly members* (thoſe luſts that diſpoſe men towards the earth and to grovel in the duſt, as the graces of the Spirit diſpoſe them heavenward and to converſe with glory) *are the children of diſobedience*, *upon whom the wrath of God cometh*. The *Faith*, the juſt live by, *is the ſubſtance of things hoped for*, &c. Such believers are *confeſſed*, *avowed ſtrangers on earth*; and ſeekers of the *better*, the *heavenly Country*, whence 'tis ſaid, *God will not be aſhamed to be called their God*; plainly implying, that as for low terrene ſpirits, that love to creep on the earth and embrace Dunghills, God will be aſhamed of them; he will for ever diſdain a relation to them, *while* and *as* ſuch. And if we will be determined

Phil. 3. 18, 19, 20.

Col. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Heb. 11. 1, 13, 16.

termined by the expreſs word of our great Redeemer, to whom we owe all the hopes of this bleſſedneſs; when he had been adviſing not to *lay up treaſure on earth*, but *in heaven*, he preſently adds, *where your treaſure is, their will your hearts be alſo.* If thy treaſure, thy great intereſt, thy precious and moſt valuable good be above, that will attract thy heart, it will certainly be diſpoſed thitherward. Mat. 6. 19, 20, 21.

Yet here it muſt carefully be conſidered, that in as much as this bleſſedneſs is *thy end, i.e.* thy *ſupream good*, (as the notion of *treaſure* alſo imports), Thy heart muſt be ſet upon it *above any other enjoyment*; elſe all is to no purpoſe. 'Tis not a faint, ſlight, over-maſtered inclination that will ſerve the turn, but (as all the forementioned Scriptures import) ſuch as will beſpeak it a mans buſineſs to ſeek Heaven, his main work; and give ground to ſay of him, *his heart is there.* If two Lovers ſolicite the ſame perſon and ſpeaking of them in compariſons ſhe ſay, *this* hath my heart; is it tolerable to underſtand her, as meaning him ſhe loves leſs? ſo abſurd would it be to underſtand Scriptures, that ſpeak of ſuch an intention of heart heaven-ward, as if the ſainteſt deſire, or coldeſt wiſh, or moſt lazy inconſtant endeavour were all they meant. No, 'tis a ſteady, prevalent, victorious direction of heart towards the future glory, in compariſon whereof, thou deſpiſeſt all things elſe (all temporal terrene things), that muſt

be the (*evidential*) ground of thy hope to enjoy it. And therefore in this deal faithfully with thy own Soul and demand of it; Doſt thou eſteem this bleſſedneſs above all things elſe? Do the thoughts of it continually return upon thee, and thy mind and heart, as it were *naturally*, run out to it? Are thy chiefeſt ſolicitudes and cares taken up about it, leſt thou ſhould'ſt fall ſhort and ſuffer a diſappointment? Doſt thou ſavour it with pleaſure; hath it a ſweet and grateful reliſh to thy Soul? Doſt thou bend all thy powers to purſue and preſs on towards it? Urge thy ſelf, to give anſwer *truly* to ſuch Enquiries; and to conſider them *ſeriouſly*, that thou may'ſt do ſo.

Such whoſe ſpirits are either *moſt highly raiſed and lift up to Heaven*, or *moſt deeply depreſt and ſunk into the Earth*, may make the cleareſt judgment of themſelves. With them that are of a middle temper, the trial will be more difficult, yet not fruitleſs, if it be managed with ſerious diligence, though no certain concluſion or judgment be made thereupon.

For the *true deſign* and uſe of all ſuch enquiries and reflections upon our ſelves (which let it be duly conſidered) is, *not to bring us into a ſtate of ceſſation from further endeavours*; as if we had nothing more to do, (ſuppoſe we judg the beſt of our ſtate that can be thought), but *to keep us in a wakeful temper of ſpirit*; that we may not forget our ſelves in the great buſineſs we have yet before

us,

us, but go on with renewed vigor through the whole courſe of renewed endeavours, wherein we are to be ſtill converſant, till we have attained our utmoſt mark and end. Therefore is this preſent enquiry directed, as introductive to the further duty, that in the following Rules is yet to be recommended.

CHAP. XVII.

Rule 3. *Directing ſuch as upon enquiry find, or ſee cauſe to ſuſpect, a total averſation in themſelves to this bleſſedneſs, to be ſpeedy and reſtleſs in their endeavours to have the temper of their ſpirits altered and made ſutable to it. Doubts and Objections concerning the* uſe *of ſuch endeavours, in ſuch a caſe, anſwered. Some Conſiderations to enforce this Direction propounded and preſſed.*

3 Rule. 3. THat *if upon ſuch reflection we find or ſuſpect our ſelves wholly diſaffected and unſutable to this bleſſedneſs, we apply our ſelves to ſpeedy inceſſant endeavours to get the temper of our ſpirits changed and fitted thereto.*

The ſtate of the caſe ſpeaks it ſelf, that there is no ſitting ſtill here. This is no condition (Soul) to be reſted in; unleſs thou art provided to encounter the terrors of eternal darkneſs, and endure the torture of everlaſting burnings. Yet am I not unapprehenſive how great a difficulty a carnal heart will make of it, to beſtir it ſelf in order to any redreſs of ſo deplorable a caſe. And how

real

real a difficulty it is, to ſay any thing that will be thought regardable to ſuch a one. Our ſad experience tells us, That our moſt efficacious words are commonly wont to be entertained as neglected puffs of wind; our moſt convictive reaſonings and perſwaſive exhortations loſt (yea, and though *they* are managed too in the name of the great God) as upon the deaf and dead: Which is too often apt to tempt into that reſolution, of *ſpeaking no more in that name.* And were it not that the dread of that great Majeſty reſtrains us, how hard were it to forbear ſuch Expoſtulations; "Lord, Why are we com-"monly ſent upon ſo vain an errand? Why "are we required to ſpeak to them that "will not hear; and expoſe thy ſacred "Truths and Counſels to the contempt of "ſinful Worms; to labour day by day in "vain, and ſpend our ſtrength for nought. Yea, we cannot forbear to complain, "None "ſo labour in vain as we: Of all men none "ſo generally improſperous and unſucceſs-"full. Others are wont to ſee the fruit of "their labours, in proportion to the expence "of ſtrength in them: But our ſtrength is "labour and ſorrow (for the moſt part) "without the return of a joyful fruit. The "Husbandman plows in hope and ſowes in "hope, and is commonly partaker of his "hope: We are ſent to plow and ſow a-"mong Rocks and Thorns, and in the high "Way; how ſeldom fall we upon good "ground? Where have we any increaſe?

"Yea

"Yea Lord, how often are men the harder "for all our labours with them; the deader "for all endeavours to quicken them? Our "breath kills them whom thou ſendeſt us to "ſpeak life to; and we often become to them "a *deadly ſavour*. Sometime, when we think "ſomewhat is done to purpoſe, our labour "all returns, and we are to begin again; and "when the duties we perſwade to, come di-"rectly to croſs mens intereſts and carnal in-"clinations, they revolt and ſtart back, as if "we were urging them upon flames or the "Swords point; and their own Souls and "the eternal glory are regarded as a thing "of nought: Then Heaven and Hell become "with them Phancies and Dreams; and all "that we have ſaid to them falſe and fabu-"lous. We are to the moſt *as men that mock*, "in our moſt ſerious warnings and counſels; "and *the word of the Lord is a reproach*. We "ſometimes fill our mouths with Arguments, "and our hearts with Hope, and think, ſure "they will now yeild; but they eſteem our "ſtrongeſt reaſonings (as *Leviathan* doth Iron "and Braſs) but as *Straw* and *rotten Wood*; "and laugh at Divine threatnings as he doth "at the ſhaking of the Spear. Yea, and when "we have convinc't them, yet we have done "nothing; though we have got their *Judg-"ments* and *Conſciences* on our ſide and their "own, their *Luſts* only reluctate and carry "all. They will *now* have their way though "they periſh. We ſee them periſhing under "our very eye, and we cry to them (in thy

"name,

"name, O Lord) to turn and live, but they "regard us not. For theſe things ſometimes "*we weep in ſecret*, and our eyes trickle down "with tears; yea, we cry to thee, O Lord, "and thou heareſt us not; thy hand ſeems "ſhortened, that it cannot ſave; it puts not "on ſtrength as in the days of old: It hath "ſnatcht Souls by thouſands, as firebrands "out of the fire; but now thou hideſt and "draweſt it back. Who hath believed our re- "port? To whom is the Arm of the Lord "revealed? Mean while even the Devils in- "ſtruments proſper more than we: And he "that makes it his buſineſs to tempt and "entice down Souls to Hell, ſucceeds more "than we that would allure them to Hea- "ven.

But we muſt ſpeak, whether men will hear or forbear; though it concerns us to do it with fear and trembling. Oh, how ſolemn a buſineſs is it to treat with Souls! and how much to be dreaded, leſt they miſcarry through our imprudence or neglect! I write with ſolicitude what ſhall become of theſe lines; with what effect they will be read (if they fall into ſuch hands) by them whom they moſt concern: Yea, and with ſome doubt, whether it were beſt to write on or forbear: Sometimes one would incline to think it a merciful Omiſſion, leſt we add to the account and torment of many at laſt; but *ſenſe of duty towards all*, and *hope of doing good to ſome* muſt overſway. Conſidering therefore the ſtate of ſuch Souls I am now dealing with, I apprehend

hend there may be obſtructions to the entertainment of the counſel here recommended, of two ſorts; partly *in their minds*, partly *in their hearts*; ſomething of *appearing reaſon*, but more of *real perverſe will*. That which I ſhall do in purſuance of it, will fall under two anſwerable heads:

1. A reply to certain Doubts and Objections, wherein to meet with the former.
2. The propoſal of ſome Conſiderations, wherein to contend againſt the latter.

As to the firſt: It appears, men are grown *ingeniouſly wicked*; and have learned how to *diſpute* themſelves into Hell; and to neglect what concerns their eternal bleſſedneſs *with ſome colour and pretence of reaſon*. It will therefore be worth the while to diſcuſs a little their more ſpecious pretences, and conſider their more obvious (ſuppoſable) ſcruples, which will be found to concern, either the *poſſibility*, *lawfulneſs*, *advantage*, or *neceſſity* of the endeavours we perſwade to.

Doub. 1. 1. *Is it a poſſible undertaking you put us upon*; or, *is there any thing we can do in order to the change of our own hearts? We find our ſelves altogether undeſirous of thoſe things wherein you ſtate bleſſedneſs, and they are without ſavour to us. If therefore the notion you give us of bleſſedneſs be right, all the work neceſſary to qualifie us for it is yet to be done; we yet remain wholly deſtitute*

deſtitute of any principle of life, that may diſpoſe us to ſuch reliſhes and enjoyments. If the new Creature (as you ſay) conſiſt in a ſuitable temper of Spirit unto ſuch a ſtate as this, 'tis as yet wholy unformed in us: And is there any thing to be done by a dead man in order to life? Can a Child contribute any thing to its firſt formation? or a Creature to its coming into being?

Reply. If you were ſerious in what you ſay, methinks you ſhould have little mind to play the Sophiſters and put fallacies upon your ſelves, in a matter that concerns the life of your Souls. And what elſe are you now doing? For ſure, otherwiſe one would think it were no ſuch difficulty to underſtand the difference between (the *eſſe ſimpliciter*) the *meer being of any thing*, and (the *eſſe tale*) *its being ſuch or ſuch*; *by the addition of ſomewhat afterward to that being.* Though nothing could contribute to its *own being ſimply*; yet ſure when *it is in being*, it may contribute to the bettering or perfecting of it ſelf, (as even the unreaſonable creatures themſelves do): And if it be a creature *naturaly capable of acting with deſign*, It may act deſignedly in order to its becoming ſo or ſo qualified, or the attaining of ſomewhat yet wanting to its perfection. You cannot be thought ſo ignorant, but that you know the *new Creature* is only an *additional* to your *former being*: And though it be true, that *it* can do no more to its own production than the unconceived Child (as nothing can act before it is), doth it

it therefore follow, that *your reaſonable Soul*, in which it is to be formed, cannot uſe Gods preſcribed means in order to that bleſſed change? You cannot act *bodily* as a Saint; but therefore can you not act *rationally* as a man! I appeal to your reaſon and conſcience in ſome particulars.

Is it *impoſſible* to you, to attend upon the diſpenſation of that Goſpel, which is *Gods power unto ſalvation*, the Seal by which he impreſſes his Image, the glaſs through which his glory ſhines to the changing of Souls into the ſame likeneſs? Are you not as able to go to Church as the Tavern; and to ſit in the aſſembly of *Saints* as of *Mockers?*

Is it *impoſſible* to you, to conſult the written word of God, and thence learn what you muſt be and do in order to bleſſedneſs? Will not your eyes ſerve you to read the Bible as well as a Gazette or Play-book?

Is it *impoſſible*, to enquire of your Miniſter or an underſtanding Chriſtian Neighbour concerning the *way* and *terms* of bleſſedneſs! Cannot your tongue pronounce theſe words, *what ſhall I do to be ſaved*, as well as thoſe, *pray what do you think of the weather*; or what news is there going? Yet further:

Is it *impoſſible*, to *apply your thoughts* to what you meet with ſuitable to your caſe, in your attendance upon preaching, reading, or diſcourſe? Have all ſuch words a barbarous ſound in your ear? Can you not conſider what *ſenſe* is carried under them; what they import and ſignifie? Can you not bethink your

your ſelf, Do the Doctrines of *God*, and *Chriſt*, and the *life to come*, ſignifie ſomething or nothing? or do they ſignifie any thing worth the conſidering, or that 'tis fit for me to take notice of?

And yet to proceed a little further with you:

I pray you once more demand of your ſelves, and put your Conſciences cloſely to it, Whether, when they have told you (as no doubt they will), that ſuch things deſerve your conſideration, it be impoſſible to you, to uſe your *conſidering power thus*, and employ it even about theſe things? Do but make this eaſie trial, and then ſay, whether it be impoſſible. See if you cannot ſelect one hour on purpoſe, wherein to ſit down by your ſelves alone, with this reſolution; *Well, I will now ſpend this hour in conſidering my eternal concernments.* When you have obtained ſo much of your ſelf; ſet your thoughts on work (you will find them voluble and unfixt, very apt to revolt and fly off from things you have no mind to, but) uſe your authority with your ſelf; tell your Soul (or let it tell it ſelf), *theſe things concern thy life.* At leaſt, taking this prepared matter along with thee (that thou may'ſt not have this pretence, thou knoweſt not what to think of) try if thou canſt not think of theſe things, now actually ſuggeſted and offered to thy thoughts: As namely,

Conſider, That thou haſt a reaſonable immortal Soul, which as it is *liable to eternal miſery*,

miſery, ſo it is *capable of eternal bleſſedneſs*.

That this bleſſedneſs thou doſt underſtand to conſiſt *only in the viſion of the bleſſed God*, in *being made like to him*, and in the *ſatisfaction* that is thence to reſult and accrue to thee.

Conſider (what thy very objection ſuppoſeth), That thou findeſt the temper of thy Spirit to be altogether indiſpoſed and averſe to ſuch a bleſſedneſs. Is it not ſo? is not this thy very caſe? feel now again thy heart? try, is it not at leaſt coldly affected towards this bleſſed ſtate?

Is it not then obvious to thee to conſider, that the temper of thy ſpirit muſt be changed, or thou art undone? That in as much as thy bleſſedneſs lies in God, this change muſt lie in the alteration of thy diſpoſitions and the poſture of thy ſpirit towards him. Further,

Canſt thou not conſider the power and fixedneſs of thy averſation from God; and with how mighty a weight thy heart is carried and held down from him? Try, lift at thy heart, ſee if it will be raiſed God-ward and Heaven-ward? Doſt thou not find, it is as if thou wert lifting at a Mountain, that it lies as a dead weight and ſtirs not? Ponder thy caſe in this reſpect. And then,

Is it not to be conſidered, That thy time is paſſing away apace? That if thou let thy ſelf alone, 'tis likely to be as bad with thee *to morrow* as *this day*, and as bad *next day* as *to morrow*? And if thy time expire and thou

thou be ſnatcht away in this ſtate, what will become of thee? And doſt thou not therefore ſee a neceſſity of conſidering what ever may be moſt moving and moſt likely to incline thy heart God-ward, of pleading yet more loudly and importunately with thy ſelf?

And canſt thou not conſider and reaſon the matter thus? "O my Soul, what's the "reaſon that thou ſo draweſt back and hang-"eſt off from thy God? that thou art ſo "unwilling to be *bleſſed in him?* that thou "ſhouldſt venture to run thy ſelf upon eter-"nal perdition rather? What cauſe hath he "ever given thee to diſaffect him? What is "the ground of thy ſo mighty prejudice? "Hath he ever done thee hurt? Doſt thou "think he will not accept a returning Soul? "that is to give the lie to his Goſpel; and "it becomes not a periſhing wretch ſo to "provoke him in whom is all its hope. Is "the eternal glory an undeſirable thing? or "the everlaſting burnings tolerable? Canſt "thou find a way of being for ever bleſſed "*without God*; or whether he will or no? "or is there a ſufficient preſent pleaſure in "thy ſinful diſtance from God, to outweigh "Heaven and Hell? Dareſt thou venture up-"on a reſolution of giving God and Chriſt "their laſt refuſal; or ſay, thou wilt never "hearken to, or have to do with them more? "or dareſt thou venture to do what thou "dareſt not reſolve? and act the wickedneſs "thou canſt not think of? ſcorn eternal Ma-

"jeſty and Love? ſpurn and trample a bleed-
"ing Saviour?

Commune thus a while with thy ſelf; but if yet thou find thy heart relent nothing, thou canſt yet further conſider, That it lies not in thy power to turn thy own heart, (or elſe how comeſt thou thus to object?), And hence,

Canſt thou avoid conſidering, *this is a diſtreſſed caſe?* that thou art in great ſtraits; liable to periſh (yea ſure to do ſo, if thou continue in that ill temper of ſpirit), and wholly unable to help thy ſelf? Surely thou canſt not but ſee this to be a moſt diſtreſſed caſe.

I put it now to thy conſcience, Whether being thus led on, thou canſt not go thus far. See whether upon trial thy Conſcience give thee leave to ſay, *I am not able thus to do or think*: And be not here ſo *fooliſh*, as to ſeparate the action of the *firſt cauſe* and the *ſecond*, in judging thy *ability*: Thou may'ſt ſay no, I cannot think a good thought *without God*: True, ſo I know thou canſt not move thy finger without God; but my meaning in this appeal to thy Conſcience is, Whether upon trial thou findeſt not an *aſſiſtance ſufficient* to carry thee thus far?

Poſſibly thou wilt ſay, Yea, but what am I the better; I am only brought to ſee my ſelf in a diſtreſſed periſhing condition, and can get no further.

I anſwer, 'Tis well thou art got ſo far, if thou do indeed ſee thy ſelf periſhing, and thy

thy drowſie Soul awake into any ſenſe of the ſadneſs of thy caſe. But I intend not thus to leave thee here; therefore let me furthermore demand of thee: What courſe would'ſt thou take in any other diſtreſs, wherein thou know'ſt not what to do to help thy ſelf? would not ſuch an exigency, when thou findeſt thy ſelf pincht and urg'd on every ſide, and every way is ſhut up to thee, that thou art beſet with calamities and canſt no way turn thy ſelf to avoid them; would not ſuch an exigency force thee down on thy knees; and ſet thee a crying to the God of mercy for relief and help? Would not *Nature* it ſelf prompt to this? Is it not *Natural* to lift up Hands and Eyes to Heaven when we know not what to do?

Audio vulgus cum ad cælum manus tendunt nihil aliud quam Deum dicunt, vulgi iſte naturalis eſt ſermo. Min. Fel. Octav.

Therefore having thus far reaſoned with thee about thy *conſidering power*: Let me demand of thee, if thou canſt not yet go ſomewhat further than *conſidering*? that is, in ſhort:

Is it impoſſible to thee, to *obey this dictate of nature?* I mean, repreſent the deplorable caſe of thy Soul before him that made it; and crave his merciful relief? Do not diſpute the matter; thou canſt not but ſee this is a *poſſible* and a *rational* courſe, as thy caſe is. *Should not a people ſeek unto their God?* Fall down therefore low before him; proſtrate thy ſelf at the foot-ſtool of his mercy-

ſeat. Tell him, thou underſtandeſt him to be the *Father of Spirits* and the *Father of Mercies*; that thou haſt heard of his great mercy and pity towards the ſpirits of men in their forlorn lapſed ſtate: What a bleſſedneſs he hath deſigned for them; what means he hath deſigned to bring them to it. Tell him thou only needeſt a temper of ſpirit ſutable to this bleſſedneſs he invites thee to: That thou canſt not maſter and change thy ſenſual earthly heart; thou know'ſt he eaſily can: Thou art come to implore his help, that his bleſſed and holy Spirit may deſcend and breathe upon thy ſtupid dead Soul; and may ſweetly encline and *move* it towards him; that it may eternally *reſt* in him; and that thou may'ſt not periſh, after ſo much done in order to thy bleſſedneſs, only for want of a heart to entertain it. Tell him, thou com'ſt upon his gracious encouragement, having heard he is as ready to give his Spirit *to them that ask him*, as Parents bread to their craving Children rather than a ſtone: That 'tis for life thou beggeſt: That 'tis not ſo eaſie to thee, to think of periſhing for ever: That thou canſt not deſiſt and give up all thy hopes: That thou ſhalt be in Hell ſhortly, if he hear and help thee not.

Laſtly, If thus thou obtain any communication of that holy bleſſed Spirit, and thou find it gently moving thy dead heart, let me once more demand of thee: Is it impoſſible to forbear this or that external act of ſin *at this*

this time, when thou art tempted to it; ſure thou canſt not ſay, *'tis impoſſible*. What neceſſitates thee to it? And then certainly thou may'ſt as well, ordinarily, with-hold thy ſelf from running into ſuch cuſtomary ſenſualities, as tend to grieve the Spirit, debauch Conſcience, ſtupifie thy Soul, and hide God from thee.

And if thou canſt do all this, do not fool thy ſlothful Soul with as idle a conceit, That thou haſt nothing to do, but to ſit ſtill, expecting till thou drop into Hell.

2. *But have I not reaſon to fear, I ſhall but add ſin to ſin in all this? and ſo encreaſe the burden of guilt upon my own Soul; and by endeavouring to better my caſe, make it far worſe.* Doub. 2.

Two things I conſider, that ſuggeſt to me this fear, The { Manner, End, *of the duties you put me upon, as they will be done by me in the caſe wherein I apprehend my ſelf yet to lie.*

1. Manner. *(As to the poſitive actions you adviſe to), I have heard, the beſt actions of an unregenerate perſon are ſins, through the ſinfulneſs of their manner of doing them; though as to the matter of the thing done, they be injoined and good: And though it be true, that the regenerate cannot perform a ſinleſs duty neither; yet their perſons and works being covered over with the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, are look't upon as*

having no ſin in them, which I apprehend to be none of my caſe.

2. End. *You put me upon theſe things in order to the attaining of bleſſedneſs; and to do ſuch things with intuition to a reward, is to be (as may be doubted) unwarrantable, mercenary, and ſervile.*

Reply. First, As to this *former reaſon* of your Doubt; methinks the propoſal of it anſwers it. For as much as you acknowledg the matter of theſe actions to be good and duty (and plain it is, they are *moral duties*, of common perpetual concernment to all *perſons* and *times*), dare you decline or diſpute againſt your *duty*.

Sure, if we compare the evil of *what is ſo ſubſtantially in it ſelf*, and *what is ſo circumſtantially*, only by the adherence of ſome *undue modus*, or manner; it cannot be hard to determine which is the *greater* and *more dreadful evil*. As to the preſent caſe; Shouldſt thou, when the great God ſends abroad his Proclamation of Pardon and Peace, refuſe to attend it, to conſider the contents of it, and thy own caſe in reference thereto, and thereupon to ſue to him for the life of thy own Soul? Doſt thou not plainly ſee, thy refuſal muſt needs be more provoking than thy defective performance? *This* ſpeaks *diſability*, but *that rebellion* and *contempt* *. Beſides, doſt thou

* Therefore as to that form of expreſſion [that ſuch acts of unregenerate men are ſins], that is a Catachreſtical piece of Rhetorick, which being ſo underſtood, is harmleſs; but to uſe it in propriety of ſpeech, and thence to go about to make men believe, that it's a ſin to do their duty, is void both of truth and ſenſe, and full of danger unto the Souls of men.

not

not ſee, that thy objecton lies as much againſt every other action of thy life; the Wiſe-man tells us, *the plowing of the wicked is ſin*, (if that be literally to be underſtood); and what wouldſt thou therefore ſit ſtill and do nothing? Then how ſoon would that *idleneſs* draw on *groſs wickedneſs*? And would not that be a dreadful confutation of thy ſelf, if thou who didſt pretend a ſcruple, that thou mighteſt not pray, read, hear, meditate, ſhalt not ſcruple to play the glutton, the drunkard, the wanton, and indulge thy ſelf in all riot and exceſs? Yea, if thou do not break out into ſuch exorbitancies, Would any one think him ſerious that ſhould ſay, it were againſt his Conſcience to be *working out his ſalvation*, and *ſtriving to enter in at the ſtrait gate*; *ſeeking firſt the Kingdom of God*, &c. Would not this ſound ſtrangely? And eſpecially, that in the mean time it ſhould never be againſt his Conſcience, to trifle away his time and live in perpetual neglects of God, in perſevering Atheiſm, Infidelity, hardneſs of heart, never regretted or ſtriven againſt: As if theſe were more innocent? Prov. 21. 4.

And what thou ſay'ſt of the different caſe of the *regenerate*, is impertinent; for as to this matter, the caſe is not different, they that take themſelves to be *ſuch*, muſt not think that by their ſuppoſed intereſt in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt their *real ſins* ceaſe to be *ſuch*, they only become *pardoned ſins*; and ſhall they therefore ſin more boldly than other men, becauſe they are ſurer of pardon?

Secondly, As to the *other* Ground of this Doubt, there can only be a fear of ſinning, upon this account, to them that make more ſins and duties than God hath made. The Doubt ſuppoſes *Religion* inconſiſtent with *Humanity*; and that God were about to raze out of the nature of man, one of the moſt radical and fundamental Laws written there, *A deſire of bleſſedneſs*: And ſuppoſes it againſt the expreſs ſcope and tenor of his whole Goſpel-revelation. For what doth that deſign, but to bring men to bleſſedneſs? And how is it a means to compaſs that deſign, but as it tends to engage mens ſpirits to deſign it too? Unleſs we would imagine they ſhould go to Heaven blindfold, or be roll'd thither as ſtones that know not whether they are mov'd; in which caſe the Goſpel, that reveals the eternal glory and the way to it, were an uſeleſs thing. If ſo expreſs words had not been in the Bible, as that *Moſes had reſpect to the recompence of reward*; yea, that our Lord Jeſus himſelf *for the joy ſet before him endured the Croſs*, &c. this had been a little more colourable, or more modeſt.

And what, do not all men, in all the ordinary actions of their lives, act, allowably enough, with intuition to much lower ends? even thoſe *particular ends* which the works of their ſeveral Callings tend to, elſe they ſhould act as Brutes in every thing they do. And would ſuch a one ſcruple, if he were pining for want of Bread, to beg or labour for it for this end, *to be relieved*. 'Tis the miſtaking

miſtaking of the *notion* of *Heaven* that hath alſo an ingrediency into this Doubt, (if it be really a Doubt): What is it a low thing to be *filled with the divine fulneſs?* to have *his glory replenishing our Souls?* to be perfectly freed from ſin? in every thing conformed unto this holy Nature and Will? That our minding our intereſt in this, or any affairs, ſhould be the principal thing with us, is not to be thought: Our Supreme end muſt be the ſame with his, who made all things for himſelf, *of whom, through whom, and to whom all things are*, that he alone might have the glory. But ſubordinates need not quarrel. A lower end doth not *exclude* the higher, but *ſerves* it; and is, as to it, a means. God is our end, as he is to be *glorified and enjoyed by us:* Our glorifying him is but the *agnition of his glory*; which we do moſt in *beholding* and *partaking it*; which is therefore in direct ſubordination thereto.

3. But it may further be doubted, *What if it be acknowledged, that theſe are both things poſſible and lawful; yet to what purpoſe will it be to attempt any thing in this kind? O what aſſurance have I of ſucceſs? Is there any word of promiſe for the encouragement of one in my caſe? Or is God under any obligation to reward the endeavours of nature with ſpecial grace? Wherefore, when I have done all I can, he may with-hold his influence, and then I am but where I was, and may periſh notwithſtanding.* Doub. 3.

And

And ſuppoſe thou periſh notwithſtanding! Do but yet conſult a little with thy own thoughts: Which is more tolerable and eaſie to them to periſh, *as not attaining what thy fainter ſtruglings could not reach*; or for the *moſt direct wilful rebellion, doing wickedly as thou couldeſt?* Or who ſhall have, thinkeſt thou, the more fearful condemnation? He that ſhall truly ſay when his Maſter comes to judgment, "I never had indeed (Lord) "an heart ſo fully changed and turned to "thee, as ſhould denote me to be the ſubject "of thy ſaving pardoning mercy; but thou "knoweſt (who knoweſt all things) I long "(and with ſome earneſtneſs) did endea-"vour it. Thou haſt been privy to my ſe-"cret deſires and moans, to the weak ſtri-"vings of a liſtleſs diſtempered ſpirit, not "pleaſed with it ſelf, aiming at a better tem-"per towards thee. I neglected not thy pre-"ſcribed means; only that grace which I "could not challenge, thou waſt pleaſed not "to give; thou didſt require what I muſt "confeſs my ſelf to have owed thee; thou "did'ſt with-hold only what thou owed'ſt "me not; therefore muſt I yeild my ſelf a "convicted guilty wretch, and have nothing "to ſay why thy ſentence ſhould not paſs. Or he that ſhall as truly hear from the mouth of his Judg, "Sinner, thou waſt often fore-"warned of this approaching day, and call'd "upon to provide for it; thou hadſt *Precept "upon Precept, and Line upon Line.* The coun-"ſels of life and peace were with frequent "impor-

"importunity preſt upon thee, but thou re-
"jected'ſt all with proud contempt, did'ſt
"deſpiſe with the ſame profane ſcorn the
"offers, commands, and threats of him that
"made thee; hardeneſt thy heart to the moſt
"obſtinate rebellion againſt his known Laws;
"did'ſt all the wickedneſs to which thy
"heart prompted thee, without reſtraint;
"declined'ſt every thing of duty which his
"Authority and the exigency of thy own
"caſe did oblige thee to; did'ſt avoid as
"much as thou couldeſt to hear or know
"any thing of my will; couldſt not find one
"ſerious conſidering hour in a whole life
"time, to bethink thy ſelf, what was likely
"to become of thee when thy place on earth
"ſhould know thee no more. Thou might'ſt
"know, thou waſt at my mercy, thy breath
"in my hand, and that I could eaſily have
"cut thee off any moment of that large ſpace
"of time my patience allow'd thee in the
"world; yet thou never thought'ſt it worth
"the while to ſue to me for thy life. De-
"ſtruction from the Lord was never a terror
"to thee. Thou wouldſt never be brought
"upon thy knees; I had none of thy ad-
"dreſſes; never did'ſt thou ſigh out a ſe-
"rious requeſt for mercy; thy Soul was not
"worth ſo much in thy account. Thy blood,
"wretch, be upon thy guilty head: *Depart*
"*accurſed into everlaſting flames*, &c.

Come now, uſe thy reaſon a while, em-
ploy a few ſober thoughts about this mat-
ter; remember, thou wilt have a long eter-
nity

nity wherein to recognize the paſſages of thy life, and the ſtate of thy caſe in the laſt judgment. Were it ſuppoſable, that one who had done as the former, ſhould be left finally deſtitute of Divine Grace and periſh. Yet, in which of theſe caſes would'ſt thou chuſe to be found at laſt?

But why yet ſhould'ſt thou imagine ſo ſad an iſſue, as that after thine utmoſt endeavours grace ſhould be with-held, and leave thee to periſh; *becauſe God hath not bound himſelf by promiſe to thee?* what promiſe have the Ravens to be heard when they cry? *But thou art a ſinner*: True, otherwiſe thou wert not without promiſe; the promiſes of the firſt Covenant would, at leaſt, belong to thee. Yet experience tells the world his *unpromiſed mercies* freely flow every where; *The whole earth is full of his goodneſs*; yea, *but his ſpecial grace is convey'd by promiſe only*; *and that only through Chriſt*; *and how can it be communicated* [*through him*] *to any but thoſe that are in him?* What then is the *firſt in-being in Chriſt no ſpecial grace?* or is there any *being in him* before the *firſt*, that ſhould be the ground of that *gracious communication?* things are plain enough, if we make them not intricate, or intangle our ſelves by fooliſh ſubtilties. God promiſes ſinners indefinitely pardon, and eternal life for the ſake of Chriſt, on condition that they believe on him. He gives of his good pleaſure that grace whereby he draws any to Chriſt, without promiſe *directly made to them*, whether *abſolute* or *conditional*; though he give it for the ſake of Chriſt alſo.

alſo. His diſcovery of his purpoſe to give ſuch grace to ſome, indefinitely, amounts not to a promiſe *claimable by any*, for if it be ſaid to be an *abſolute promiſe, to particular perſons*, who are they? whoſe duty is it to believe it made to him? If *conditional*, what are the conditions upon which the firſt grace is *certainly* promiſed? who can be able to aſſign them?

But poor ſoul! thou need'ſt not ſtay to puzzle thy ſelf about this matter. *God binds himſelf to do what he promiſes; but hath he any where bound himſelf to do no more?* Did he promiſe thee thy being; or that thou ſhould'ſt live to this day? did he promiſe thee the bread that ſuſtains thee, the daily comforts of thy life? Yea, (what is nearer the preſent purpoſe), did he promiſe thee a ſtation under the Goſpel? or that thou ſhould'd ever hear the name of Chriſt? if ever his Spirit have in any degree mov'd upon thy heart, inclin'd thee at all ſeriouſly to conſider thy eternal concernments, did he beforehand make thee any promiſe of that?

A promiſe would give thee a *full certainty of the iſſue*, if it were *abſolute*, out of hand? it *conditional*, aſſoon as thou findeſt the condition performed. But what, canſt thou act upon no lower rate than a *foregoing certainty*, a *preaſſurance of the event?*

My friend, *conſider* a little, (what thou canſt not but *know already*) that 'tis HOPE (built with thoſe that are rational, upon rational probabilities, with many, oftentimes, upon none at all,) is the great Engine that moves the World, that

that keeps all ſorts of men in action. Doth the Husbandman *foreknow* when he Plows and Sows, that the Crop will anſwer his coſt, and pains. Doth the Merchant *foreknow*, when he imbarques his goods, he ſhall have a ſafe, and gainful return? Doſt thou *foreknow*, when thou eateſt, it ſhall refreſh thee? when thou takeſt Phyſick, that it ſhall recover thy health, and ſave thy life? Yea further, can the *covetous* man pretend a promiſe, that his unjuſt practices ſhall *inrich* him? the *malicious*, that he ſhall proſper in his deſign of *revenge*? the *ambitious*, that he ſhall be *great and honourable?* the *voluptuous*, *that his pleaſure ſhall be always unmixt with gall, and wormwood?* Can any ſay, they ever had a promiſe to aſcertain them that profaneneſs and ſenſuality would bring them to Heaven? that an ungodly diſſolute life would end in bleſſedneſs? Here the Lord knows men can be confident and active enough without a promiſe, and againſt many an expreſs threatning. Wilt thou not upon the hope thou haſt before thee, do as much for thy ſoul, for eternal bleſſedneſs, as men do for uncertain riches, ſhort pleaſures, an airy ſoon-blaſted name? yea as much as men deſperately do to damn themſelves and purchaſe their own ſwift deſtruction.

Or canſt thou pretend, though thou haſt no pre-aſſuring promiſe, thou haſt no hope? Is it nothing to have heard ſo much of Gods gracious Nature? Is it ſutable to the reports, and diſcoveries he hath made of himſelf, to let a poor wretch periſh at his feet, that lies

proſtrate

proſtrate there expecting his mercy? Didſt thou ever hear he was ſo little a lover of ſouls? Do his giving his Son, his earneſt, unwearied ſtrivings with ſinners, his long patience, the clear beams of Goſpel-light, the amiable appearances of his Grace, give ground for no better, no kinder thoughts of him? yea, hath he not expreſly ſtiled himſelf *the God hearing prayers*, taken a name on purpoſe to encourage *all fleſh to come to him*, Wilt thou dare then to adopt thoſe profane words, *what profit is it to pray to him?* and ſay, 'tis better ſit ſtill, reſolving to periſh, than addreſs to him, or ſeek his favour, becauſe he hath not by promiſe aſſured thee of the iſſue, and that, if he ſuſpends his grace, all thou doſt will be in vain? Pſal. 65. 2. Job 21. 15.

"How would'ſt thou judg of the like reſo-
"lution? If the Husbandman ſhould ſay,
"when I have ſpent my pains and coſt in
"breaking up and preparing the Earth, and
"caſting in my Seed; if the Sun ſhine not,
"and the rain fall not in ſeaſon, if the influ-
"ences of Heaven be ſuſpended, if God with-
"hold his bleſſing, or if an invading enemy
"anticipate my Harveſt, all I do and expend is
"to no purpoſe; and God hath not aſcertain'd
"me of the contrary, by expreſs promiſe,
"'tis as good therefore ſit ſtill. Cenſure and
"anſwer him and thy ſelf both together.

But thou wilt yet it may be ſay, that though all this may be poſſibly true, yet thou canſt not all this while be convinc'd of any need ſo earneſtly Doubt.

to

to buſie thy ſelf about this affair. For God is wont to ſurpriſe ſouls by preventing acts of Grace, to be found of them that ſought him not, to break in by an irreſiſtable power, which they leaſt thought of. And to go about to anticipate his grace, were to detract from the freeneſs, and ſo from the glory of it.

Reply. But art thou not in all this afraid of charging God fooliſhly? When the merciful God, in compaſſion to the ſouls of men, hath given his Goſpel, conſtituted and ſetled a ſtanding Office to be perpetuated through all ages for the publication of it; Invited the world therein to a treaty with him, touching the concernments of their eternal peace; required ſo ſtrictly their attendance to and moſt ſerious conſideration of his propoſals and offers; encouraraged, and commanded their addreſſes to him, ſet up a Throne of Grace on purpoſe, wilt thou dare to ſay, all this is needleſs?

When God ſpeaks to thee, is it *needleſs* for thee to hear him, or regard what he ſaith? or when he commands thee to pour forth thy ſoul to him, wilt thou ſay, *'tis a needleſs thing?*

Doſt thou not plainly ſee, that the peculiar, appropriate aptitude of the things preſt upon thee, ſpeaks them *neceſſary*, as *means* to their deſigned end; whence alſo they are fitly called *Means of Grace?* Is not the Word of God the *immortal ſeed? Are not Souls begotten by that Word to be the firſt fruits of his Creatures?* Is it not the Type, the Mould, or Print by which Divine Impreſſions are put upon the Soul:

Neceſſitas medii.

1 Pet. 1. 23. Jam. 1. 18. Rom. 6. 17 Joh. 17. 17

Soul: *The Inſtrument by which he ſanctifies.* Are not the exceeding great and precious Promiſes the *Vehicula*, the Conveighancers *of the Divine Nature.* And what can be the means to mollifie and melt the obdurate heart of a ſinner, to aſſwage its enmity, to overcome it into the love of God, to transform it into his Image, but the Goſpel-diſcovery of Gods own gracious and holy Nature? And can it operate to this purpoſe without being heard, or read, and underſtood, and conſidered, and taken to heart? Do but compare this *Means* God works by, with the *Subject* to be wrought upon, and the *Effect* to be wrought, and nothing can be conceived more *adequate* and *fitly correſponding.* 2 Pet. 1.

But in as much as there hath been an enmity between God and ſinners, and that therefore the *whole entire means of reconciliation* muſt be a *Treaty*; and that a Treaty cannot be managed or conceived without *mutual interlocution*, therefore muſt the ſinner have a way of expreſſing its own ſenſe to God, as well as he ſpeaks his mind to it; which ſhews the neceſſity of *Prayer* too; and therefore, becauſe the *Peace* begins on his part, (though the War began on ours), he *calls* upon ſinners to open themſelves to him; *Come now, let us reaſon together*; he invites addreſſes; *Seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is nigh*, &c. And doth not the natural relation it ſelf between the *Creator* Iſa. 1. Chap. 55

and a *Creature* require this, beſides the exigency of our preſent caſe? Every Creature is a *Supplicant*; its *neceſſary dependance* is a *natural Prayer*. *The eyes of all things look up*, &c. 'Tis the proper glory of a Deity to be depended on and addreſt to. *Should not a people ſeek unto their God.* 'Tis an appeal to reaſon; is it not a congruous thing?

Iſa. 8. 19.

Neceſſitas præcepti.

Further, Doſt thou not know, thy Makers Will *made known* infers upon thee a *neceſſity* of obeying; unleſs thou think the *breach* between God and thee is better to be healed by *Rebellion*; and that the only way to expiate wickedneſs, were to continue and multiply it. Is it a needleſs thing to comply with the Will of him that gave thee Breath and Being? And whoſe Power is ſo abſolute over thee, as to all thy concernments, both of time and eternity?

Again, while thou pretendeſt theſe things are needleſs; come now, ſpeak out freely; What are the more neceſſary affairs wherein thou art ſo deeply engaged, that thou can'ſt not ſuffer a diverſion? What, is the ſervice and gratification of thy fleſh and ſenſe ſo important a buſineſs, that thou can'ſt be at no leiſure for that *more needleſs* work of *ſaving thy Soul?* Where is thy reaſon and modeſty? Doſt thou mind none other, from day to day, but *neceſſary affairs?* Doſt thou uſe, when thou art tempted to vain dalliances, empty diſcourſes, intempe-

rate

rate indulgence to thy appetite; ſo to anſwer the temptation, *It is not neceſſary*? Or art thou ſo deſtitute of all Conſcience and ſhame, to think it *unneceſſary* to work out thy ſalvation, to *ſtrive to enter in at the ſtrait gate that leads to life*? but moſt indiſpenſably neceſſary to be very critically curious about what thou ſhalt eat, and drink, and put on; and how to ſpend thy time with greateſt eaſe and pleaſure to thy fleſh, that it may not have the leaſt cauſe to complain it is neglected?

Thy pretence, *That God is wont to be found of them that ſought him not*; to the purpoſe thou intendeſt it, is a moſt ignorant or malicious abuſe of Scripture. The Prophet is in that Text foretelling the Calling of the *Gentiles*; who, while they remained ſuch, did not ('tis true) enquire after God; but then he expreſly firſt tells us, (perſonating God), *I am ſought of them that asked not for me*, (that is after the Goſpel came among them), and then 'tis added. *I am found* (*upon this ſeeking*, plainly) *of them that ſought me not*, (*i.e.* who once in their former darkneſs, before I revealed my ſelf in the *Goſpel-diſpenſation* to them, *ſought me not*), *q.d.* I am *now* ſought of a people that *lately* ſought me not, nor asked after me, and I am found of them. But what's this to thy caſe; whom God hath been, in the Goſpel, earneſtly inviting to ſeek after him, and thou all this while refuſeſt to comply with the invitation? Iſa. 65. 1.

And ſuppoſe thou hear of ſome rare inſtances of perſons ſuddenly ſnacht by the hand of Grace out of the mid'ſt of their wickneſs, as fire-brands out of the fire, Is it therefore the ſafeſt courſe to go on in a manifeſt rebellion againſt God, till poſſibly he may do ſo by thee alſo? How many thouſand may have dropt into Hell ſince thou heard'ſt of ſuch an inſtance, (as a worthy perſon ſpeaks to that purpoſe *)? If thou haſt heard of one *Elijah* fed by Ravens, and of ſome thouſands by our Saviours Miracles, can'ſt thou thence plead a repeal of that Law to the World, *They that will not labour, ſhall not eat*? Or is it a ſafer or wiſer courſe to wait till food drop into thy mouth from Heaven, than to uſe a prudent care for the maintenance of thy life? If thou ſay, thou heareſt but of few that are wrought upon in this way, of *their own foregoing expectation and endeavour*, Remember, (and let the thought of it ſtartle thee), that there are *but few that are ſaved*. And therefore are ſo few wrought upon in this way, becauſe ſo few will be perſwaded to it. But can'ſt thou ſay (though God hath not bound himſelf to the meer natural endeavours of his Creature neither), that ever any took this courſe, and perſiſted with faithful diligence, but they ſucceeded in it?

* Mr. Baxter.

What thou talkeſt of the *freeneſs of Gods grace*, looks like an hypocritical pretence. Is there no way to *honour his grace*, but by affront-

affronting his authority? but to ſin, *that grace may abound*? Sure grace will be better pleaſed by Obedience, than by ſuch Sacrifice. For a miſerable periſhing wretch to uſe Gods means to help it ſelf, doth that look like merit? Is the Beggar afraid thou ſhould'ſt interpret his coming to thy door and ſeeking thy alms, to ſignifie, as if he thought he had deſerved them? I hope thou wilt acknowledg thy ſelf leſs than the leaſt of all Gods mercies, and that thou canſt not deſerve from him a morſel of Bread, may'ſt thou not therefore in thy neceſſity labour for thy living, leaſt thou ſhould'ſt intrench upon the freeneſs of Divine Bounty? With as much wiſdom and reaſon might'ſt thou decline the uſe of all other means to preſerve thy life (which thou muſt owe always to free mercy), to eat when thou art hungry, to take Phyſick when thou art ſick, leaſt thou ſhould'ſt intimate thy ſelf to have merited the ſtrength and health ſought thereby.

Nor can I think of any rational pretence that can more plauſibly be inſiſted on, than theſe that have been thus briefly diſcuſt. And it muſt needs be difficult to bring any appearance of reaſon for the patronage of ſo ill a cauſe, as the careleſs giving up of a mans Soul to periſh eternally, that is viſibly capable of eternal bleſſedneſs. And certainly were we once apprehenſive of the caſe, the attempt of diſputing a man into ſuch a reſolution, would appear much more ridicu-

lous, than if one ſhould gravely urge arguments to all the neighbourhood, to perſwade them, to burn their houſes, to put out their eyes, to kill their children and cut their own throats. And ſure, let all imaginable pretences be debated to the uttermoſt, and it will appear, that nothing with-holds men from putting forth all their might in the endeavour of getting a ſpirit ſutable to this bleſſedneſs, but an obſtinately perverſe and ſluggiſh heart, diſpoil'd and naked of all ſhew of reaſon and excuſe. And though that be a hard task, to reaſon againſt *meer will*, yet that being the way to make men willing, and the latter part of the work propoſed in purſuance of *this direction*, I ſhall recommend only ſome ſuch conſiderations as the Text it ſelf will ſuggeſt, for the ſtirring up and perſwading of ſlothful reluctant hearts, (chuſing thoſe as the moſt proper limits, and not being willing to be infinite herein, as, amid'ſt ſo great a variety of conſiderations to that purpoſe, one might).

That in general which I ſhall propoſe, ſhall be only the *miſery of the unrighteous*; whereof we may take a view in the oppoſite bleſſedneſs *here* deſcribed. The *Contradictories* whereto will afford a *Negative*, the *Contraries* a *Poſitive* deſcription of this miſery. So that each Conſideration will be double; which I ſhall now (rather glance at than) inſiſt upon.

Pa- ta { *Damni.* *Sinſus.*

1. Conſider then, If thou be found at laſt unqualified for this bleſſedneſs, How wilt thou

thou bear it to be baniſh't eternally from the *bleſſed face of God?* There will be thoſe that ſhall behold *that face in righteouſneſs*; ſo ſhalt not thou: The wicked is driven away in his wickedneſs, with a *never more ſee my face.*

Again, What amazing viſions wilt thou have! What gaſtly, frightful objects to converſe with, amidſt thoſe horrors of eternal darkneſs; when the Devil and his Angels ſhall be thy everlaſting aſſociates! What direful images ſhall thoſe accurſed enraged Spirits and thy own fruitful parturient imagination for ever entertain thee with, and preſent to thy view!

2. Is it a ſmall thing with thee, to be deſtitute of all thoſe *inherent excellencies* which the perfected Image of God, whereof thou waſt capable, comprehends? View them over in that (too defective) account ſome of the former pages gave thee of them. Thou art none of thoſe bright Stars, thoſe Sons of the morning, thoſe bleſſed glorified Spirits, thou might'ſt have been. But,

Conſider, *What art thou?* What ſhalt thou for ever be? What image or likeneſs ſhalt thou bear? Alas, poor wretch thou art now a Fiend! conformed to thy helliſh partners; thou beareſt *their accurſed likeneſs.* Death is now finiſhed in thee; and as thou *ſowed'ſt to the fleſh*, thou *reapeſt corruption.* Thou art become a loathſom Careaſs; the Worms that never die, abound in thy putrified filthy Soul. Thou haſt an Hell in thee. Thy venomous

luſts are now grown *mature*, are in their full grown ſtate. If a world of iniquity, a fulneſs of deadly poiſon, tempered by Hell fire, is *here* ſometimes tobe found in a *little member*, what will there then be in all thy parts and powers.

3. Conſider, How bleſſed a *ſatisfaction* doſt thou loſe? how pleaſant and delightful a *reſt*, ariſing both from the ſight of ſo much glory and ſo peaceful a temper and conſtitution of ſpirit? Here thou might'ſt have enjoyed an eternal undiſturbed reſt.

But for *reſt* and *ſatisfaction*, thou haſt *vexation* and *endleſs torment*, both by what thou *beholdeſt* and what thou *feeleſt within thee*. Thy dreadful viſions ſhall not let thee *reſt*: But the chief matter of thy diſquiet and torment is in the very *temper* and *conſtitution* of thy Soul. Thy horrid luſts are fuller of poiſonous energy, and are deſtitute of their wonted objects, whence they turn all their power and fury upon thy miſerable ſelf. Thy enraged paſſions would fly in the face of God, but they ſpend themſelves in tormenting the Soul that bred them. Thy curſes and blaſphemies, the invenom'd Darts pointed at Heaven, are reverberated and driven back into thy own heart. And therefore,

4. Conſider, What *awaking* haſt thou? Thou awakeſt not into the mild and chearful light of that bleſſed day, wherein the Saints of the moſt High, hold their ſolemn joyful triumph.

But thou awakeſt into that great and terrible

rible day of the Lord (doſt thou deſire it, for what end is it to thee?), a day of darkneſs, *and not light*; a gloomy and a ſtormy day. The day of thy *birth* is not a more *hateful*, than this is a *dreadful* day. Thou awakeſt and art beſet with terrors, preſently apprehended and drag'd before thy glorious, ſevere Judg; and thence into eternal torments. O happy thou, might'ſt thou never awake, might the grave conceal and its *more ſilent darkneſs* cover thee for ever. But ſince thou muſt awake then, how much more happy wert thou, if thou would'ſt ſuffer thy ſelf to be awaken'd now. What, to loſe and endure ſo much, becauſe thou wilt not now a little beſtir thy ſelf and look about thee? Sure thy Conſcience tells thee, thou art urg'd but to what is *poſſible*, and *lawful*, and *hopeful*, and *neceſſary*; methinks, if thou be a man and not a ſtone, if thou haſt a reaſonable Soul about thee, thou ſhouldſt preſently fall to work, and rather ſpend thy days in ſerious thoughts, and prayers, and tears, than run the hazard of loſing ſo tranſcendent a glory and of ſuffering miſery, which as *now* thou art *little* able to *conceive*, thou wilt *then* be *leſs* able to *endure*.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

Rule 4. *Directing to the endeavour of a* gradual improvement *in ſuch a diſpoſedneſs of Spirit (as ſhall be found in any meaſure already attained) towards this bleſſedneſs. That 'tis bleſſedneſs begun which diſpoſes to the Conſummate ſtate of it. That we are therefore to endeavour the daily encreaſe of our preſent knowledg of God, conformity to him, and the ſatisfiedneſs of our ſpirits therein.*

4 Rule. THat *when we find our ſelves in any diſpoſition towards this bleſſedneſs, we endeavour a gradual improvement therein, to get the habitual temper of our ſpirits made daily more ſutable to it.*

We muſt ſtill remember, we have not yet attained, and muſt therefore continue preſſing forward *to this mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus.* That prize (not *price*, as we commonly miſ-read it in our Bibles) of which the Apoſtle hear ſpeaks, is (as may be ſeen by looking back to v. 8, 9, &c.) the ſame with the bleſſedneſs in the Text. Such a knowledg of Chriſt, as ſhould infer at laſt

Phil. 3. 14. Βραβεῖον.

laſt his participation with him in his ſtate of glory, or of the *reſurrection of the dead.* This is the ultimate term, the ſcope or end of that high calling of God in Chriſt, ſo 'tis alſo ſtated elſewhere, who hath *called* us into his eternal glory by Chriſt Jeſus. 1 Pet. 5. 10

Now we ſhould therefore frequently recount, how far ſhort we are of this glory, and ſtir up our Souls to more vigorous endeavours in order to it.

Our ſutableneſs to this bleſſedneſs ſtands *in our having the elements and firſt principles of it in us*; 'tis glory only that fits for glory; ſome previous ſights and impreſſions of it, and a pleaſant complacential reliſh thereof, that frame and attemper us by degrees to the full conſummate ſtate of it. This is that therefore we muſt endeavour,

A *growing* { *Knowledg of God*, *Conformity to him*, and *Satisfiedneſs of Spirit therein.*

What we expect ſhould be one day perfect, we muſt labour may be, in the mean time, always growing.

1. *Our knowledg of God.* The knowledg of him I here principally intend, is not *notional* and *ſpeculative*, but (which is more ingredient to our bleſſedneſs, both inchoate and perfect) that of *converſe*, that *familiar knowledg* which we uſually expreſs by the name of *acquaintance.* See that this knowledg of him be encreaſed daily. Let us now uſe our

our selves much with God. Our knowledg of him must aim at *conformity to him*; and how powerful a thing is *converse* in order hereto? How insensibly is it wont to transform men, and mould anew their Spirits, Language, Garb, Deportment? To be remov'd from the *solitude* or *rudeness* of the Country, to a *City* or *University*, What an alteration doth it make? How is such a person devested by degrees of his rusticity, of his more uncomely and agrest manners? Objects we converse with, beget their Image upon us. *They walked after vanity, and became vain*, saith *Jeremiah*; and *Solomon*, *He that walketh with the wise, shall be wise.* Walking is an usual expression of converse. So to converse with the *holy* is the way to be *holy*, with *heaven* the way to be *heavenly*, with *God* the way to be *God-like*.

Jer. 2. 5.

Pro. 13. 20.

Let us therefore make this our present business, much to *acquaint our selves with God.* We count upon seeing him *face to face*, of being always in his presence beholding his glory, that speaketh very intimate acquaintance indeed. How shall we reach that pitch? What, to live now as Strangers to him? Is that the way? *The path of the righteous is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.* The Text shews us the *righteous mans end*, to *behold the glory of Gods face*, &c. 'Tis easie to apprehend, then *his way* must needs have in it a *growing brightness*, as he comes still nearer this end. Every nearer approach to a lucid thing infers

Prov. 4. 18.

(to

(to us) an increaſe of light from it. We ſhould therefore be *following on to know the Lord*, and we ſhall ſee his *going forth will be before us as the morning*. He will be ſtill viſiting us with *renewed, increaſing* light, (for ſuch is morning light, *freſh* and *growing* light), and ere long it will be perfect day. Labour we to improve our knowledg of God to ſuch a degree of acquaintance as our preſent ſtate can admit of. To be as inward with him as we can, to familiarize our ſelves to him. His Goſpel aims at this, to make thoſe that were *afar off nigh*. Far-diſtant objects we can have no diſtinct view of. He can give us little account of a perſon that hath only ſeen him afar off; ſo God beholds the proud afar off; that is, he will have no acquaintance with them: Whereas with the humble he will be familiar, *he will dwell*, (as in a family) *with them*. So the ungodly behold God till he bring them in and make them nigh; then they are no longer ſtrangers, but of his family and houſhold, now throughly acquainted. Several notes there are of *a through acquaintance* which we ſhould endeavour may concur in our acquaintance with God, in that analogy which the caſe will bear. Hoſ. 6. 3. Iſa. 57. 15.

To know his nature; or (as we would ſpeak of a man), what will pleaſe and diſpleaſe him, ſo as to be able in the whole courſe of our daily converſation to *approve* our ſelves to him. To have the skill ſo to manage our converſation, as to continue a correſpondence, not interrupted by any our offenſive unpleaſing demeanours:

demeanours: To *walk worthy of God unto all well-pleaſing.* It concerns us moſt to ſtudy and endeavour this *practical knowledg* of the nature of God; what truſt, and love, and fear, and purity, &c. his faithfulneſs, and greatneſs, his goodneſs, and holineſs, &c. do challenge from us: What may in our daily walking be agreeable, what repugnant to the ſeveral Attributes of his being.

To know his ſecrets; to be as it were of the Cabinet-Council * (the word uſed by the *Pſalmiſt* hath a peculiar ſignificancy to that purpoſe; to ſignifie, not only counſel, but a Council, or the *conſeſſus* of perſons that conſult together). This is his gracious vouchſafement, to humble reverential ſouls. *The ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him*; ſuch acquaintance with him is to be ſought, to know the (communicable) ſecrets both of his mind and heart. *Of his mind*, his truths, Goſpel-myſteries, that were kept *ſecret* from ages, and generations. *We have the mind of Chriſt.* This is great inwardneſs. *Of his heart*; his love, his good will, his kind boſom-thoughts towards our ſouls.

* Pſal. 25. 14.

To know his methods, and the courſe of his diſpenſations towards the World, his Church, and ſpecially our own Spirits. This is great *knowledg of God*, to have the skill to trace his footſteps, and obſerve by comparing times with times, that ſuch a courſe he more uſually holds; and accordingly, with great probability, collect, from what we have ſeen and obſerved, what we may expect. What order

and

and ſucceſſion there is of ſtorms of wrath, to clouds of ſin; and again of peaceful, lucid intervals, when ſuch ſtorms have infer'd penitential tears. In what exigences, and diſtreſſes, humble mourners may expect Gods viſits and conſolations. To recount in how great extremities, former experience hath taught us not to deſpair; and from ſuch experience ſtill to argue our ſelves into freſh reviving hopes when the ſtate of things (whether publick or private, outward or ſpiritual) ſeems forlorn.

To know the proper ſeaſons of addreſs to him; and how to behave our ſelves moſt acceptably in his preſence. In what diſpoſitions and poſtures of Spirit, we are fitteſt for his converſe, ſo as to be able to come to him in a good hour, *in a time when he may be found.* Pſal. 32. 6.

To know his voice: This diſcovers acquaintance. *The ear trieth words, as the mouth taſteth meats.* Job 12. 11. Gods righteous ones, that are filled with the fruits of righteouſneſs, do proportionably abound in *knowledg and in all ſenſe.* Phil. 1. 9. They have quick, naked, unvitiated ſenſes, to diſcern between good and evil; Yea and can have the ſuffrage of ſeveral ſenſes concerning the ſame Object. They have a kind of taſte in their ear. They taſte the good word of God even in his previous workings on them. *Being new-born* they are intimated to have *taſted in the word* how gracious the Lord is. As they grow up thereby, they have ſtill a more judicious ſenſe, and can more certainly diſtinguiſh, when God ſpeaks to them, and

αἰσθητήρια γεγυμνασμένα. Heb. 5. alt. Heb. 6.

1 Pet. 1. 2, 3.

Joh. 10. and when a ſtranger goes about to counterfeit his voice. They can tell, at firſt hearing, what is grateful and nutritive, what offenſive and hurtful to the divine life; what is harmonious and agreeable, what diſſonant to the Goſpel *already received*, ſo that an Angel from Heaven muſt expect no welcome, if he bring *another*.

To know his inward motions and impulſes; When his hand toucheth our hearts, to be able to ſay, *this is the finger of God*, there is ſomething divine in this touch. *My beloved* Cant. 5. 4. *put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved.* This ſpeaks acquaintance when the ſoul can ſay, *I know his very touch*, the leaſt impreſſion from him, I can diſtinguiſh it from thouſands of objects that daily beat upon my heart.

So we apprehend God proportionably more clearly as the Idea we have of a perſon is more diſtinct that we

To underſtand his looks; to know the meaning of his aſpects, and glances, of the various caſts, as it were of his eye. Such things intimate friends can, in a ſort, talk by, with one another; *I will guide thee by mine eye*; that implies an intelligent teachable ſubject. We have now no full-ey'd appearances of God; he ſhews himſelf, looks in upon us through the latteſs, through a vail, or ſhadow, or a glaſs. That meaſure of acquaintance with him to be able to diſcern and own him in

have of him by the ſight of his picture or face through a glaſs, beyond that which we have by hearing a reported deſcription of him, though by himſelf unſeen. This is acquaintance with God.

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his appearances, *is* a great participation of Heaven, Utter unacquaintance with God is expreſt by the denial of theſe two, *ye have neither heard his voice, nor ſeen his ſhape*, Joh. 5.

Finally which brings us home to the text, *to keep our eye intentively fixed on him* not to underſtand *his* looks only as before but to return our own. Intimate acquaintance (when ſuch friends meet) is much expreſt, and improv'd by the eye, by a reciprocation of glances, or (which ſpeaks more inwardneſs) more fixed views; when their eyes do even feed and feaſt upon each other. This we ſhould endeavour to be as in a continual interview with God.

How frequent mention have we of the fixed poſture of *his* eye towards Saints. *To this man will I look*; I have found out, *q. d.* that which ſhall be ever the delight of mine eye, do not divert me. Towards him I *will* look. What he ſpeaks of the material Temple is ultimately to be referr'd to that which is typified, *his Church, his Saints*, united with his Chriſt, *Mine eyes and my heart ſhall be there perpetually*; and elſewhere, *He with-draweth not his eyes from the righteous*; he cannot (admirable Grace) allow himſelf to look off, to turn aſide his eye: And he ſeems impatient of the averſion of theirs, *Let me ſee thy countenance* (ſaith he) *for it is comely.*

1 King. 9. 3
Job 36. 7. Pſal. 33. 18 & 34. 15.
Cant. 2. 14.

Is it not much more reaſonable, it ſhould be thus with us towards him? that we ſhould be more delighted to behold real comlineſs

than he with what is ſo, only, by his gracious vouchſafement and eſtimation? How careful ſhould we be, that our eye may at every turn meet his; that he never look towards us and find it in the ends of the earth, carelesly wandring from him? How well doth it become us, to *ſet the Lord always before us*; to have *our eye ever towards the Lord*?

Pſal. 16. 8. Pſal. 25.

This you ſee is the initial leading thing in this bleſſedneſs of heaven. So it muſt have alſo a prime ingrediency into our heaven on earth. It is a part of celeſtial bleſſedneſs; but it is not *peculiar* to it. The preſent bleſſedneſs the righteous enjoy here is a participation of Heaven. It hath ſomething in it of every thing that is ingredient into that *perfect bleſſedneſs*. Our preſent knowledg of God is often expreſt by *viſion*, or ſight, as we have had occaſion to obſerve in many paſſages of Scripture. He hath given us ſuch a viſive power, and made it connatural to that heavenly creature, begotten of him, in all the true ſubjects of this bleſſedneſs. *We know that we are of God*, and preſently it follows, *he hath given us an underſtanding to know him that is true*. This new-man is not born blind. The bleſſed God himſelf is become liable to the view of his regenerate intellectual eye, clarify'd and fill'd with vigor and ſpirit from himſelf. He therefore that hath made (that hath new formed) this eye, ſhall not he be ſeen by it; ſhall not we turn it upon him? Why do we not more

1 Joh. 5. 19, 20.

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frequently bleſs our eye with that ſight? This Object (though of ſo high excellency and glory) will not hurt, but perfect and ſtrengthen it. They are refreſhing vital beams that iſſue from it. Sure we have no excuſe that we eye God ſo little, *i.e.* that we mind him no more. Why have we ſo few thoughts of him in a day? What, to let ſo much time paſs and not ſpare him a look, a thought? Do we intend to employ our ſelves an eternity in the viſions of God, and is our preſent averſion from him and intention upon vanity, our beſt preparation thereto? This loudly calls for redreſs. Shall God be waiting all the day as on purpoſe to catch our eye, to intercept a look, and we ſtudiouſly decline him, and ſtill look another way, as of choice? and what is it but choice? Can we pretend a neceſſity to forget him all the day? How cheap is the expence of a look? How little would it coſt us? And yet, how much of duty might it expreſs? how much of comfort and joy might it bring into us?

How great is our offence and loſs, that we live not in ſuch more conſtant views of God? Herein we ſin and ſuffer both at once, (things both very unſutable to Heaven). Mindfulneſs of God is the living Spring of all holy and pleaſant affections and deportments towards him; ſets all the wheels agoing; makes the Soul as the Chariots of *Aminadib.* Theſe wheels have their eyes alſo, are guided by a mind, by an intellectual principle. Knowing intelligent beings (as we

alſo are by participation and according to our meaſure) ſo act mutually towards one another. We cannot move towards God but with an *open* eye, ſeeing him and our way towards him. If we cloſe our eyes, we ſtand ſtill, or blindly run another courſe, we know not whither. All ſin is darkneſs, whether it be *neglect of good*, or *doing of evil*: Its way is a way of darkneſs; as a courſe of holy motion is *walking in the light*. Our ſhutting our eyes towards God creates that darkneſs; ſurrounds us with a darkneſs comprehenſive of all ſin. Now is every thing of enjoined duty waved, and any evil done, that ſinful nature prompts us to. Well might it be ſaid,

Joh. 3. 11. *He that ſinneth hath not ſeen God.* When we have made our ſelves this darkneſs, we fall of courſe under Satans Empire, and are preſently within his Dominions. He is the Prince of darkneſs, and can rule us now at his will. Periſhing loſt Souls are ſuch as *in whom the God of this world hath blinded their minds.* ---To *open their eyes and turn them from darkneſs to light*, is, *to turn them* alſo *from the power of Satan unto God.* What an hell of wickedneſs are we brought into, in the twinkling of an eye? We are without God in the world, as if a man wink, though at noon-day, he hath as it were put out the Sun, 'tis with him as if there were no ſuch thing. When we have baniſhed God out of our ſight and forgotten him, 'tis with us as if there were *no God*. If ſuch a ſtate grow habitual to us, (as we know every ſinful averſion

averſion of our eye from God tends thereto), what wickedneſs is there that will not lurk in this darkneſs? How often in Scripture is *forgetting God* uſed as a *character*, yea as a *paraphraſe*, a full (though ſummary) expreſſion of ſin in general? As if the wickedneſs, the malignity, the very hell it ſelf of *ſin*, were wholly included (and not connoted only) here. *Now conſider this* (after ſo dreadful an enumeration, ſo black a Catalogue) *all that forget God.* And (as deep calleth to deep, one hell to another), *The wicked ſhall be turned into hell, and all the people that forget God.* That heap, that maſs of wickedneſs, of pride, of perſecution, curſing, blaſphemy, deceit, and miſchief, *all meet in one that hath not God in all his thoughts.* Pſal. 50. Pſal. 9.

But who is ſo hardy, to look the holy God in the face and ſin againſt him? What an aſtoniſhment is it, when he watches over *preſent ſin*, or brings forth *former ſins* out of ſecret darkneſs and ſets them in the light of his countenance? Who, that underſtands any thing of the Nature and Majeſty of God, dare call him for a witneſs of his ſinning? The worſt of men would find themſelves under ſome reſtraint, could they but obtain of themſelves, to ſit down ſometimes and *ſolemnly think of God.* Much more would it prove an advantage to (them whom I moſt intend) ſuch as ſin within the nearer call and reach of mercy; that ſin not to the utmoſt latitude: Even ſuch as lead the ſtricteſt lives, and are ſeldomer found to tranſgreſs;

are not their ſins wont to begin with *forgetting God*? Did they eye God more, would they not ſin leſs frequently, and with greater regret? You his Saints, that have *made a Covenant with him by Sacrifice*, that profeſs the greateſt love and devotedneſs to him, and ſeem willing your ſelves to become Sacrifices and lay down your lives for his ſake; What is it a harder thing to give him a look, a thought? or is it not too common a thing, without neceſſity (and then not without injury) to with-hold theſe from him? Let us bethink our ſelves, are not the principal diſtempers of our ſpirits and diſorders yet obſervable in our lives to be referr'd hither? As to *enjoined ſervices*; what, ſhould we venture on omiſſions, if we had God in our eye? or ſerve him with ſo declining backward hearts? Should we dare to let paſs a day, in the Even whereof we might write down, *nothing done for God this day?* Or ſhould we ſerve him as an hard Maſter, with ſluggiſh deſpondent ſpirits? The Apoſtle forbids ſervants to ſerve with eye-ſervice, as men-pleaſers; meaning, they ſhould eye men leſs and God more. Sure, as to *him*, our ſervice is not enough *eye-ſervice*. We probably eye men more than we ſhould; but we do not eye Him enough. Hence ſuch hanging of hands, ſuch feebleneſs of knees, ſuch lazineſs and indifferency, ſo little of an active zeal and laborious diligence, ſo little *ferveney of ſpirit in ſerving the Lord*. Hence alſo ſuch an averſion to hazardous ſervices, ſuch fear of attempting

tempting any thing (though never ſo apparent important duty) that may prove coſtly, or hath danger in it. *We look not to him that is inviſible.*

And as to *forbidden things*; ſhould we be ſo proud, ſo paſſionate, ſo earthly, ſo ſenſual, if we had God more in view? Should we ſo much ſeek our ſelves and indulge our own wills and humors, drive a deſign with ſuch ſolicitude and intention of mind, for our private intereſts? ſhould we walk at ſuch a latitude, and more conſult our own inclination than our rule, allow our ſelves in ſo much vanity of converſation, did we mind God as we ought?

And do we not ſenſibly puniſh our ſelves in this neglect? What a diſmal Chaos is this world while we ſee not God in it. To live deſtitute of a divine preſence, to diſcern no beam of the heavenly glory; to go up and down day by day, and perceive nothing of God, no glimmering, no appearance; This is *diſconſolate* as well as *ſinful* darkneſs. What can we make of Creatures, what of the daily events of Providence, if we ſee not in them the glory of a Deity; if we do not contemplate and adore the divine wiſdom, power, and goodneſs, diffuſed every where. Our practical Atheiſm and inobſervance of God, makes the World become to us the *region and ſhadow of death*, ſtates us as among Ghoſts and Spectres, makes all things look with a ghaſtly face, imprints death upon every thing we ſee, encircles us with gloomy dreadful

ſhades and with uncomfortable apparitions. To behold the tragical Spectacles always in view, the violent luſts, the rapine and rage of ſome, the calamitous ſuffrings, the miſeries and ruins of others, to hear every corner reſounding with the inſultations of the Oppreſſor and the mournful groans of the oppreſſed, What a painful continuing death were it, to be in the world *without God!* At the beſt, all things were but a *vaniſhing ſcheme*, an image ſeen in the dark. The Creation, a thing the faſhion whereof were paſſing away. The whole Contexture and Syſtem of Providence were meer confuſion, without the leaſt concinnity or order. Religion an acknowledged trifle, a meer mockery? What, to *wink* our ſelves into ſo much darkneſs and deſolation? And by ſealing up our eyes againſt the divine light and glory, to confirm ſo formidable miſeries upon our own Souls? How dreadfully ſhall we herein revenge our own folly, in nullifying him to our ſelves, *who is the All in All*? Sure there is little of Heaven in all this?

But if now we open our eyes upon that all-comprehending glory, apply them to a ſteady intuition of God, How heavenly a life ſhall we then live in the world! To have God always in view, as the Director and end of all our actions: To make our eye crave leave of God, to conſult him ere we adventure upon any thing, and implore his guidance and bleſſing: Upon all occaſions to direct our prayers to him and *look up*: To make

our

our eye await his commanding look; ready to receive all intimations of his will; this is an angelical life. To be as thoſe Miniſters of his that are always ready to do his pleaſure: To make our eye do him homage and expreſs our dependence and truſt: To approve our ſelves in every thing to him, and act as always in his preſence, obſerving ſtill how his eye obſerves us, and expoſing our ſelves willingly to its inſpection and ſearch, contented always he ſhould ſee through and through us: Surely there is much of Heaven in this life: So we ſhould endeavour to live here. (I cannot omit to give you this inſtruction in the words of an Heathen), "We ought "(ſaith he) ſo to live, as always within "view, order our cogitations as if ſome one "might or can look into the very inwards "of our breaſt. For, to what purpoſe is it, "to hide any thing from man? from God "nothing can be hid; he is continually pre- "ſent to our ſpirits, and comes amidſt our "inmoſt thoughts, &c.

Sic cum vivendum eſt tanquam in conſpectu vivamus, &c. Sen. Epiſt. 83.

This is *to walk in the light*, amidſt a ſerene placid mild light, that infuſes no unquiet thoughts, admits no guilty fears, nothing that can diſturb or annoy us.

To eye God in all our comforts, and obſerve the ſmiling aſpect of his face, when he diſpenſes them to us.

To eye Him in all our afflictions, and conſider the paternal wiſdom that inſtructs us in them; how would this increaſe our mercies and mitigate our troubles?

To

To eye Him in all his Creatures, and obſerve the various prints of the Creators glory inſtampt upon them. With how lively a luſtre would it cloath the world, and make every thing look with a pleaſant face! what an heaven were it to look upon God, as filling all in all; and how ſweetly would it, ere-while, raiſe our Souls into ſome ſuch ſweet ſeraphick ſtrains, *holy, holy,—the whole earth is full of his glory.* Iſa. 6. 2, 3.

To eye Him in his Providences, and conſider how all events are with infinite wiſdom diſpoſed into an apt ſubſerviency to his holy Will and Ends. What difficulties would hence be ſolved? What ſeeming inconſiſtencies reconcil'd? And how much would it contribute to the eaſe and quiet of our minds?

To eye Him in his Chriſt, the expreſs Image of his perſon, the brightneſs of his glory, and in the Chriſtian Oeconomy the Goſpel-revelation and Ordinances through which he manifeſts himſelf.

To behold Him in the poſture wherein he ſaves Souls, *clad with the garments of Salvation*, girt with power and apparell'd with love, travelling in the greatneſs of his ſtrength, *mighty to ſave.*

To view Him addreſſing himſelf to allure and win to him the hearts of ſinners, when he diſcovers himſelf in Chriſt, upon that reconciling deſign, makes *grace that brings ſalvation appear, teaching to deny ungodlineſs*, &c.

To

To behold Him entring into humane fleſh, pitching his Tabernacle among men, hanging out his Enſigns of peace, laying his trains, ſpreading his net, *the cords of a man, the bands of love.*

To ſee Him in his Chriſt, aſcending the Croſs, lifted up to draw all men to him; and conſider that mighty love of *Juſtice* and of *Souls*, both ſo eminently conſpicuous in that ſtupendous Sacrifice. Here to fix our eyes looking to Jeſus and behold him whom we have pierced.

To ſee His power and glory, as they are wont to be ſeen in his ſanctuaries; to obſerve him in the ſolemnities of his worſhip and the graceful poſtures wherein he holds communion with his Saints, when he ſeats himſelf amidſt them on the Throne of grace, receives their addreſſes, diſpenſes the tokens and pledges of his love. Into what tranſports might theſe viſions put us every day!

Let us then ſtir up our drowſie Souls, open our heavy eyes and turn them upon God, inure and habituate them to a conſtant view of his (yet vailed) face, that we may not ſee him only by *caſual glances*, but as thoſe that *ſeek his face*, and make it our buſineſs to gain a thorow knowledg of him.

But let us remember, that all our preſent Viſions of God muſt aim at a further Conformity to him; they muſt deſign *imitation*, not the *ſatisfying of curioſity*; our looking muſt not therefore be an inquiſitive buſie prying into the unrevealed things of God,

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Carefully abſtain from ſuch over-bold preſumptuous looks. But remember, we are to eye God as our *patern.* Wherein he is to be ſo, he hath plainly enough reveal'd and propos'd himſelf to us. And conſider, this is the patern both to which we *ought* and to which we *ſhall* be conformed (if we make it our buſineſs), ſo will *ſenſe of duty* and *hope of ſucceſs* concur to fix our eye and keep it ſteady.

Eſpecially, let us endeavour to manage and guide our eye aright, in beholding him, that our ſight of him may moſt effectually ſubſerve this deſign of being *like him*; and herein nothing will be more conducible, than that our looks be qualified with

{ *Reverence*, and
{ *Love.*

1. Let them be *reverential* looks. We ſhall never be careful to imitate a deſpiſed patern, or that we think meanly of: When this is the intimate ſenſe of our ſoul, *Who is a God like unto thee in holineſs! There is none holy as the Lord:* This will ſet our powers on work; ſuch ſights will command and over-awe our ſouls into conformity to him. Subjects have ſometimes affected to imitate the very imperfections and deformities of their *adored Prince.* Let us greaten our thoughts of God. Look to him with a ſubmiſſive adoring eye. Let every look import worſhip and ſubjection. Who can ſtand before

before apprehended *ſovereign Majeſty* with ſuch a temper of ſoul as ſhall ſignifie an affront to it? This will make every thing in us unſuitable to God, yield and render our ſouls ſuſceptible of all divine and holy impreſſions.

2. Let them be *friendly* and (as far as may conſiſt with that reverence) *amorous* looks. 'Tis natural to affect and endeavour likeneſs to them we love. Let *love* always ſit in our eye, and inſpirit it; this will repreſent God always amiable, will infinitely commend to us his nature and attributes, and even raviſh us into his likeneſs. The loving Spouſe often glories, to wear her beloved Husbands picture on her breaſt. The love of God will much more make us affect to bear his image in our hearts. His Law is a true repreſentation of him, and *Love* is the fulfilling of that Law, an exemplification of it in our ſelves. Love will never enter a quarrel, nor admit of any diſagreement with God. His more terrible appearances will be commendable in the eye of Love. It thinks no evil. But ſo interprets and comments upon his ſeverer aſpects, whether through his Law or Providence, as to judg all amiable, and frame the ſoul to an anſwerable deportment.

2. In this way then *let us endeavour a growing conformity unto God.* It hath been much (and not unneceſſarily) inculcated already, that the bleſſedneſs of the righteous hereafter, doth not conſiſt, meerly, in behold-

beholding an external objective glory, but in *being alſo glorified.* They are happy by a participated glory; by being made like God, as well as *ſeeing his glorious likeneſs*, whereby the conſtitution of their Spirits is changed and reduced to that excellent harmonious agreeable temper, that holy compoſure and peaceful ſtate from which bleſſedneſs is inſeparable.

As far as we are capable of bleſſedneſs in this world, it muſt be ſo with us *here.* Glory without us will not make us happy in Heaven; much leſs will any thing without us make us happy on earth. 'Tis an idle dream, of ſickly crazy minds, that their bleſſedneſs conſiſts in ſome *external good*, that is ſeparable and diſtant from them; which therefore as they blindly gueſs, they uncertainly purſue; never aiming to *become good*, without which they can never know what it is to be bleſſed. What felicity are men wont to imagine to themſelves in this or that change of their outward condition; were their ſtate ſuch, or ſuch, then they were happy, and ſhould deſire no more? As the Childs phanſie ſuggeſts to it, if it were on the top of ſuch a Hill, it could touch the Heavens, but when with much toil it hath got thither, it finds it ſelf as far off as before. We have a ſhorter and more compendious way to it, would we allow our ſelves to underſtand it. *A right temper of mind* involves bleſſedneſs in it ſelf: 'Tis this only *change* we need to endeavour. We wear out our days

days in vanity and miſery, while we neglect this work, and buſie our ſelves to catch a fugitive ſhadow, that hovers about us. It can never be well, till our own Souls be an Heaven to us, and bleſſedneſs be a domeſtick, an home-dwelling inhabitant there. 'Till we get a ſettled principle of holy quietude into our own breaſts; and become the ſons of peace, with whom the peace of God may find entrance and *abode:* Till we have that treaſure within us, that may render us inſenſible of any dependence on a foreign good, or fear of a foreign evil. Shall that be the boaſt and glory of a Philoſopher only, *I carry all my goods with me where ever I go?* And that a vertuous good man is liable to no hurt? "*Seneca* thinks they diſcover a low Epiſt. 92.
"Spirit, that ſay, externals can add any
"thing (though but a very little) to the
"felicity of an honeſt mind; as if (ſaith he)
"men could not be content with the light
"of the Sun without the help of a candle or
"a ſpark? And ſpeaking of *the conſtancy of the vertuous man*, (ſaith he) "They do ill that
"ſay, ſuch an evil is tolerable to him, ſuch
"a one intolerable, and that confine the
"greatneſs of his mind within certain bounds
"and limits. Adverſity (he tells us) over-
"comes us, if it be not wholly overcome.
"*Epicurus* (ſaith he) the very patron of your
"ſloth, acknowledges yet, that unhappy e-
"vents can *ſeldom* diſturb the mind of a
"vertuous perſon, (and he adds), how
"had he *almoſt* uttered the voice of a *man!*

"I pray,

Max. Tyr. diſſert. 2. who adds, For a good man cannot receive detriment from an evil man.

"I pray, (ſaith he), ſpeak out a little more "boldly, and ſay he is above them altoge- "ther. Such apprehenſions the more ver- tuous Heathens have had of the efficacy and defenſative power of Moral goodneſs, (how- ever defective their notion might be of the thing it ſelf): Hence *Socrates* the *Pagan* Martyr is reported to have cried out, (when thoſe perſons were perſecuting him to death), *Anytus* and *Meletus* can kill me, but they cannot hurt me. And *Anaxarchus* the Phi- loſopher having ſharply reproved *Nicocreon*, and being by him ordered to be beaten to death with iron Mallets, bids, *ſtrike* on, *ſtrike* on, thou may'ſt (ſaith he) break in pieces this veſſel of *Anaxarchus*, but *Anaxar- chus* himſelf thou canſt not touch.

Diogen. Laert. Anaxar- chus.

Shall Chriſtianity here confeſs it ſelf out- vy'd? ſhall we, to the reproach of our Reli- gion, yeild the day to *Pagan-morality*, and renew the occaſion of the ancient complaint, *That the Faith of Chriſtians is out-done by the Heathen Infidelity?* It is, I remember, the challenge of *Cecilius* in *Minucius*. "There is "*Socrates* (ſaith he) the Prince of Wiſdom, "whoſoever of you Chriſtians is great enough "to attempt it, let him imitate him if he can. Methinks we ſhould be ambitious to tell the world in our lives, (for Chriſtians ſhould live great things, not ſpeak * them), That a greater than *Socrates* is here: To let them ſee in us, our *repreſented patern*: To ſhew forth higher virtues than thoſe of *Socrates*; even

Non præſtat fides quod præſtitit infidelitas.

* As this Authors expreſſion is.

even *his*, who hath *called us out of darkneſs into his glorious and marvellous light.*

Certain it is, that the Sacred Oracles of the Goſpel ſet before us a more excellent patern, and ſpeak things not leſs magnificent, but much more modeſt and perſpicuous: With leſs pomp of words they give us a much clearer account of a far more excellent temper of mind, and preſcribe the direct and certain way of attaining it, (Do but view over the many paſſages of Scripture occaſionally glanc't at, *Chap.* 7.).

But we grope as in the dark for bleſſedneſs; we ſtumble at noon day as in the night, and wander as if we had no eyes; we miſtake our buſineſs, and lay the Scene of an happy ſtate at a great diſtance from us, in things which we cannot reach, and which if we could it were to little purpoſe.

Not to ſpeak of groſſer Senſualiſts, (whom at preſent I have leſs in my eye), Is there not a more refined ſort of perſons, that neglecting the great buſineſs of inſpecting and labouring to better and improve their ſpirits, are wholly taken up about the affairs of another Sphere, that are more ſolicitous for *better times*, for a *better world*, than *better ſpirits*; that ſeem to think all the happineſs they are capable of on earth, is bound up in this or that external ſtate of things? Not that the care of all publick concernments ſhould be laid aſide, leaſt of all, a juſt ſolicitude for the Churches welfare: But that ſhould not be pretended, when our own intereſt

is the *one thing* with us. And when we are *really ſolicitous* about the Churches intereſts, we ſhould ſtate them aright. God deſigns the afflictions of his people for their ſpiritual good, therefore that is a much greater good than their exemption from ſuffering theſe evils; otherwiſe, his means ſhould eat up his end, and be more expenſive than *that* will countervail; which were an imprudence no man of tolerable diſcretion would be guilty of. We ſhould deſire the outward proſperity of *Sion*, for it is a *real good*; but in as much as it hath in it the goodneſs, not of an *end*, but only (and that but ſometimes neither) of a *means*; not a conſtant, but a mutable goodneſs; not a principal, but a leſſer ſubordinate goodneſs; we muſt not deſire it *abſolutely*, nor *chiefly*, but with ſubmiſſive limited deſires. If our hearts are grieved to hear of the *ſufferings* of the Church of God in the world, but not of their *ſins*; If we more ſenſibly regret at any time, the perſecutions and oppreſſions they undergo, than their ſpiritual diſtempers, their earthlineſs, pride, cold love to God, fervent animoſities towards each other; It ſpeaks an uninſtructed carnal mind. We take no right meaſure of the intereſts of Religion, or the Churches welfare, and do moſt probably miſtake our ſelves as much in judging of our own; and meaſure theirs by our own miſtaken model.

And this is the miſchievous cheat many put upon their own Souls, and would obtrude

trude (too often) upon others too; that over-looking the great design of the Gospel, to transform mens spirits and change them into the Divine likeness, they think 'tis Religion enough to espouse a Party and adopt an Opinion; and then vogue themselves friends to Religion according to the measure of their zeal for their own Party or Opinion; and give a very pregnant proof of that zeal, by magnifying or inveighing against the times, according as they favour or frown upon their empty unspirited Religion. It being indeed such (a secret consciousness whereof they herein bewray) as hath no other *life* in it, than what it owes to external favour and countenance. And therefore all publick rebukes are justly apprehended *mortal* to it; whereas that *substantial Religion* that adequately answers the design, and is animated by the Spirit of the Gospel, possesses the Souls of them that own it, with a secure confidence, that it can live in any times, and hold their Souls in life also. Hence they go on their way with a free unsolicitous chearfulness, enjoying silently in their own bosoms, that repose and rest which *naturally* results from a sound and well-composed temper of spirit. They know their happiness depends upon nothing without them*. That they hold it by a better tenure than that of

* Ἰδιώτου στάσις καὶ χαρακτὴρ, οὐδέποτε ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ προσδοκᾶ ὠφέλειαν ἢ βλάβην, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ τῶν ἔξω Φιλοσόφου στάσις καὶ χαρακτὴρ, πάσαν ὠφέλειαν καὶ βλάβην ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ προσδοκᾶ. *Epict.*

the Worlds courteſie. They can be quiet in the midſt of ſtorms, and abound in the want of all things. They can *in patience poſſeſs their own Souls*, and in them a vital ſpring of true pleaſure when they are driven out of all other poſſeſſions. They know the living ſenſe of theſe words, That *the good man is ſatisfied from himſelf:* That *to be ſpiritually minded is life and peace:* That *nothing can harm them that are followers of the good:* That *the way to ſee good days, is to keep their tongue from evil, and their lips from ſpeaking guile, to depart from evil and do good, to ſeek peace and purſue it.*

They cannot live in bad times; they carry that about them that will make the worſt days good to them. Surely they can never be happy in the beſt times, that cannot be ſo in any. Outward proſperity is quite beſides the purpoſe to a diſtempered Soul, when nothing elſe troubles, it will torment it ſelf. Beſides, we cannot command at pleaſure the benign aſpects of the world, the ſmiles of the times; we may wait a life's time, and ſtill find the ſame adverſe poſture of things towards us from without. What dotage is it to place our bleſſedneſs in ſomething to us *impoſſible*, that lies wholly out of our power; and in order whereto we have nothing to *do*, but ſit down and *wiſh*; and either *faintly hope*, or *ragingly deſpair*. We cannot change times and ſeaſons, nor alter the courſe of the World, create new Heavens and new Earth. Would we not

not think our ſelves mockt, if God ſhould command us theſe things in order to our being happy? 'Tis not our buſineſs, theſe are not the affairs of our own Province (bleſſed be God 'tis not ſo large) further than as our bettering our ſelves may conduce thereto; and this is that which we may do and ought, 'tis our proper work, in obedience and ſubordination to God as his inſtruments, to govern and cultivate our own ſpirits, to intend the affairs of that his Kingdom in us (where we are his Authorized Vice-Roys), that conſiſts *in righteouſneſs, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt.* We can be benign to our ſelves, if the world be not ſo to us; cheriſh and adorn our inward man; that though the *outward man* be expoſed daily to periſh (which we cannot help, and therefore it concerns us not to take thought about it), the *inward* may be renewed day by day. We can take care that our Souls may proſper, that through our oſcitant neglect they be not left to languiſh and pine away in their own iniquities. They may be daily fed with the Heavenly hidden *Manna* and with the Fruits of the Paradiſe of God; they may enjoy at home a continual feaſt, and with an holy freedom luxuriate in Divine Pleaſures, the joys wherewith the ſtrangers intermeddle not, if we be not unpropitious and unkind to our ſelves.

And would we know wherein that ſound and happy complexion of ſpirit lies, that hath ſo much of Heaven in it: *'Tis a pre-*

ſent gradual participation of the Divine likeneſs. It conſiſts in being conformed to God; 'tis (as the Moraliſt tells us) * If one would give a ſhort compendious Module of it, *Such a temper of mind as becomes God*; or to give an account of it, *in his own words*, who preſcribes it, and who is himſelf the higheſt Patern of this bleſſed Frame, * 'Tis *to be transformed in the renewing of our minds, ſo as to be able to prove what is the good, and perfect, and acceptable will of God*; that is, experimentally to find it in our ſelves, impreſt and wrought into our own ſpirits, ſo as to have the complacential reliſh and ſavour of its Goodneſs, Excellency, and Pleaſantneſs diffuſed thorow our Souls. Where remember, this was written to ſuch as were ſuppoſed Saints; whence it muſt be underſtood, of a continued progreſſive transformation, *a renewing of the inward man day by day*, (as is the Apoſtles expreſſion elſewhere). 'Tis a more perfect reception of the impreſs of God, revealing himſelf in the Goſpel; the growth and tendency of the New Creature, begotten unto the eternal bleſſedneſs, towards its mature and moſt perfect ſtate and ſtature in the fruition thereof.

* Denique ut brevitèr tibi formulam ſcribam; talis animus ſapientis ſibi eſſe debet qualis Deum decet, Sen. Epiſt.

* Rom. 12. 2.

And 'tis this I am now preſſing; in as much as ſome account hath been already given (according as we can now imperfectly gueſſe at it, and ſpell it out), what the conſtitution of the holy Soul is, in its glorified ſtate, when it perfectly partakes the Divine likeneſs; that when we find in our ſelves

ſelves any principles and firſt elements of that bleſſed frame, we would endeavour the gradual improvement thereof, and be making towards that perfection. This therefore being our preſent work; let it be remembred wherein that participated likeneſs of God hath been ſaid to conſiſt; and labour now the neareſt approach to that pitch and ſtate. Your meaſures muſt be taken from what is moſt perfect, come now as near it as you can, and as that *Pagan's* advice is; "If yet thou art not *Socrates*, however "live as one that would fain be *Socrates*. Though yet thou art not perfect, live as one that aims at it, and would be ſo. *Epiſtet.*

Only it muſt be conſidered, *that the conformity to God, of our preſent ſtate, is in extent larger and more comprehenſive than that of our future*; though it be unſpeakably leſs perfect in degree. For there is no Moral Excellency (that we have any preſent knowledg of) belonging to our glorified ſtate, which is not in ſome degree, neceſſarily to be found in Saints on earth: But there are ſome things which the exigency of our preſent ſtate makes neceſſary to us, *here*, which will not be ſo in the ſtate of glory; Repentance, Faith, as it reſpects the Mediator, in order to our future happineſs; Patience of injuries, Pity to the diſtreſſed, &c. Theſe things, and whatſoever elſe, whoſe objects ceaſe, muſt be underſtood to ceaſe with them. In ſhort, *here*, is requiſite all that Moral good which concerns both our *end*

and *may*; *there*, what concerns our *end* only.

Yet is the whole compaſs of that gracious frame of ſpirit, requiſite in this our preſent ſtate, all comprehended in *conformity to God*. Partly, in as much as ſome of theſe graces which will ceaſe hereafter, in their exerciſe, as not having objects to draw them forth into act, have their patern in ſome communicable Attributes of God, which will ceaſe alſo, as to their denomination and exerciſe; their objects then ceaſing too, as his patience towards ſinners, his mercy to the miſerable: Partly, in as much as other of thoſe graces now required in us, though they correſpond to nothing in God that is capable of the ſame name, as *Faith in a Saviour*, Repentance of ſin (which can have no place in God), they yet anſwer to ſomething in this nature, that goes under other names; and is the reaſon wherefore he requires ſuch things in us. He hath in his Nature that Faithfulneſs and All-ſufficient fulneſs, that challenges our Faith; and that Hatred of ſin, which challenges our Repentance for it, having been guilty of it. His very nature obliges him to require thoſe things from us, the ſtate of our caſe being conſidered. So that the ſum even of our preſent duty lies in receiving this entire impreſſion of the Divine likeneſs, (in ſome part invariably and eternally neceſſary to us, in ſome part neceſſary with reſpect to our preſent ſtate). And herein is our preſent

ſent bleſſedneſs alſo involved. If therefore we have any deſign to better our condition in point of bleſſedneſs, it muſt be our buſineſs to endeavour after a fuller participation of all that likeneſs, in all the particulars it comprehends. You can pitch your thoughts upon no part of it, which hath not an evident direct tendency to the repoſe and reſt of your ſpirits. I ſhall recommend only ſome few inſtances; that you may ſee how little reaſon or inducement a Soul conformed to the holy will of God, hath to ſeek its comforts and content elſewhere.

Faith correſponds to the *Truth* of God, as it reſpects Divine Revelations: How pleaſant is it to give up our underſtandings to the conduct of ſo ſafe a guide; to the view of ſo admirable things as he reveals!

It correſponds to his goodneſs, as it reſpects his offers; How delectable is it to be filling an empty Soul from the Divine fulneſs! What pleaſure attends the exerciſe of this Faith towards the Perſon of the Mediator, *viewing him* in all his Glorious Excellencies, receiving him in all his gracious Communications by this *Eye* and *Hand*.

How pleaſant is it to exerciſe it in reference to *another world!* living by it in a *daily proſpect of eternity*; in reference to *this world*, to live without care in a chearful dependence on him that hath undertaken to care for us!

Repentance is that by which we *become like* the holy God; to whom our ſin had made

us

us moſt unlike before. How ſweet are kindly relentings, penitential tears, and the return of the Soul to its God, and to a right mind!

And who can conceive the Raviſhing Pleaſures of *Love to God!* wherein we not only *imitate*, but intimately *unite* with him, who is *Love it ſelf.* How pleaſant to let our Souls diſſolve here, and flow into the Ocean, the Element of Love!

Our *Fear* correſponds to his *Excellent Greatneſs.* And is not (as it is a part of the New Creature in us) a tormenting ſervile paſſion, but a due reſpectfulneſs and obſervance of God; and there is no mean pleaſure in that holy awful ſerioufneſs unto which it compoſes and forms our ſpirits.

Our *Humility*, as it reſpects *him*, anſwers *his high excellency*; as it reſpects our own inferiors, *his gracious condeſcention.* How pleaſant is it to fall before him! And how connatural and agreeable to a good ſpirit, to ſtoop low, upon any occaſion, to do good!

Sincerity is a moſt God-like excellency; an imitation of his *Truth*, as grounded in his All-ſufficiency; which ſets him above the neceſſity or poſſibility of any advantage by colluſion or deceit; and correſponds to his Omniſciency and heart-ſearching eye. It heightens a mans ſpirit to a holy and generous boldneſs; makes him apprehend it beneath him to do an unworthy diſhoneſt action, that ſhould need a palliation or a con-

concealment *. And gives him the continual pleaſure of ſelf-approbation to God, whom he chiefly ſtudies and deſires to pleaſe.

* As that Noble *Roman* whom his Architect (about to build him an houſe) promiſed to contrive it free from all his neighbours inſpection; he replies, nay if thou have any art in thee, build my houſe ſo that all may ſee what I do. *Vell. Pat. p.* 32.

Patience, a prime Glory of the Divine Majeſty, continues a mans poſſeſſion of his own Soul, his Liberty, his Dominion of himſelf. He is (if he can ſuffer nothing) a Slave to his vileſt and moſt ſordid paſſions *at home*, his own baſe fear, and brutiſh anger, and effeminate grief, and to any mans luſts and humours beſides, that he apprehends can do him hurt. It keeps a mans Soul in a peaceful calm, delivers him from (that moſt unnatural) ſelf-torment, defeats the impotent malice of his moſt implacable enemy, who fain would vex him, but cannot.

Juſtice, the Great Attribute of the Judg of all the Earth, as ſuch; ſo far as the impreſſion of it takes place among men, preſerves the Common Peace of the World, and the Private Peace of each man in his own boſom, ſo that the *former* be not diſturbed by *doing* of mutual injuries, nor the *latter* by the conſcience of *having done them.*

The Brotherly love of fellow-Chriſtians; the impreſſion of that *ſpecial love*, which God bears to them all, admits them into one anothers boſoms, and to all the endearments and pleaſures of a *mutual communion.*

Love

Love to enemies, the expreſs image of our heavenly Father; by which we appear his children, begotten of him; overcomes evil by goodneſs, blunts the double edge of revenge; at leſt, the ſharper edge, (which is always towards the Author of it), ſecures our ſelves from wounding impreſſions and reſentments; turns keen anger into gentle pity; and ſubſtitutes mild pleaſant forgiveneſs in the room of the much uneaſier thoughts and ſtudy of retaliation.

Mercifulneſs towards the diſtreſſed; as our Father in Heaven is merciful, heaps bleſſings upon our Souls, and evidences our Title to what we are to live by, the Divine mercy.

An univerſal benignity and propenſion to do good to all; in imitation of the immenſe diffuſive goodneſs of God, is but kindneſs to our ſelves, rewards it ſelf by that greater pleaſure is in giving than in receiving; and aſſociates us with God in the *bleſſedneſs* of this work, as well as in the diſpoſition to it; who exerciſes loving kindneſs in the Earth, *becauſe He delighteth therein.*

Here are ſome of (the μιμήματα τῆς Θείας ζωῆς, or) the things wherein conſiſts that our conformity to the Divine Nature and Will, which is proper to our preſent ſtate. And now, who can eſtimate the bleſſedneſs of ſuch a Soul? Can (in a word) the ſtate of that Soul be unhappy that is full of the Holy Ghoſt, full of Love, Joy, Peace, Long-

ſuffering,

ſuffering, Gentleneſs, Goodneſs, Faith, Meekneſs, Temperance, thoſe bleſſed fruits of that bleſſed Spirit? Bleſſedneſs is connaturalized unto this Soul: Every thing doth its part, and all conſpire to make it happy. This Soul is a Temple, an Habitation of Holineſs. Here dwells a Deity in his Glory. 'Tis a Paradiſe, a Garden of God. Here he walks and converſes daily, delighted with its fragrant fruitfulneſs. He that hath thoſe things and aboundeth, is not barren or unfruitful in the knowledg of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus: He is the Sun, and the knowledg of him, the quickening beams that cheriſh and ripen theſe fruits.

But the Soul that lacketh theſe things is a Deſart, a Habitation of Devils. Here is ſtupid diſconſolate infidelity, inflexible obſtinacy and reſolvedneſs for Hell, Hatred and contempt of the Soveraign Majeſty; whom yet, its ſecret miſgiving thoughts tell it, will be too hard for it at laſt. Here is ſwoln pride and giddy vain-glory, diſguiſed hypocriſie and pining envy, raging wrath and ravenous avarice, with what you can imagine beſides, leading to miſery and deſolation.

You have then ſome proſpect of a happy temper of ſpirit. It can now be no difficulty to you, to frame an Idea of it in your thoughts, to get a *notional image* (or this likeneſs in the notion of it) into your minds; but that will avail you little, if you have not the *real image* alſo; that is, your ſpirits

rits really faſhioned and formed according thereto: If having the knowledg of theſe things (as the Pagan Moraliſt's expreſſion before-mentioned is of vertuous Rules and Precepts) they become not *habitual to you, and your ſpirits be not transfigured into them.*

Philoſophia dividitur in hæc Scientiam, & habitum animi, unam illam qui didicit & facienda at vitanda percipit nondum ſapiens eſt, niſi in ea quæ didicit animus ejus transfiguratus eſt. Sen. (*ex Agrippâ*) Ep. 94.

But now, I treat with ſuch as are ſuppoſed to have ſome ſuch real impreſſions, that they may be ſtirr'd up to endeavour a further perfecting of them. In order whereto I ſhall add but this two-fold advice:

1. 1. Be very careful that this *living Image* (ſuch you have been formerly told it is) may *grow equally* in every part. See that the impreſſion of this likeneſs be *entire*, that it be not a maimed thing; if it be, God will never own it as his production. *Integrity* is the glory of a Chriſtian: To be *entire, lacking nothing.* This is the *ſoundneſs* of heart that excludes a bluſhing conſciouſneſs and miſgiving; exempts it from the fear of a *ſhameful diſcovery. Let my heart be ſound in thy ſtatutes*; is paraphraſed, *by having reſpect to all Gods commandments*; to which is oppoſite, that being *partial in the Law*, ſpoken of by the Prophet by way of complaint concerning the Prieſts of that time. A thing hateful in the eye of God, and as uncomfortable to our ſelves, as to be without a Leg or an Arm.

Pſal. 119. 6, 80.

Mal. 2. 9.

And

And ſee that it be preſerved entire by a *proportional* and *uniform growth*, that freſh life and motion may daily appear in every Limb of this heavenly new Creature. How odious a deformity is it, when a *ſhew* of *Moral Vertues* excludes *Godlineſs*? And how much more odious (in as much as there is more impudent falſhood in it, and more of diſhonourable reflection upon God) when under an high pretence of *Godlineſs*, any ſhall allow themſelves in viſible *Immorality*? What, to be oppreſſive, envious, contentious, deceitful, proud, turbulent, wrathful, moroſe, malicious, fretful, and peeviſh, and yet a Chriſtian? What ſerious perſon, that ſhall have no fairer repreſentation of Chriſtianity than ſuch do give, would not be ready to ſay rather, *Sit anima mea cum Philoſophis*, If this be Chriſtian Religion, give me honeſt Paganiſm. A Chriſtian that hath received the proper, uniform, entire impreſs of the Goſpel of Chriſt, is the moſt meek, mild, calm, harmleſs, quiet thing in the world. Never mention ſo venerable a Name, if you will not be very jealous of the Honour of it. Will you give God occaſion to charge you, *Wretch, I never had had this diſhonour, if thou hadſt never been call'd a Chriſtian; thou art a Chriſtian to no purpoſe, or to very bad; it does thee no good, and it injures me?*

But (which is more directly conſiderable as to our preſent purpoſe) the neglect and conſequent decay of any gracious principle, infers a *langnor*, a conſumption and enfeeblement

ment of all. Any ſuch perverſe diſpoſition doth not affect that part only, is not only an impairment to the contrary gracious principle, but (as a Cancer in ſome exterior part of the body) it gradually creeps up till it invade vitals. Can the love of God live and grow in an unquiet, angry, uncharitable breaſt? Conſider *Jam.* 1. 26. 1 *Joh.* 3, 17.

2. 2. Be conſtantly intent upon this buſineſs of *ſpiritual growth*. Mind it as a deſign, make a ſolemn purpoſed buſineſs of it, your great daily buſineſs: You do not Till your Ground by chance, as a caſual thing; but you do it induſtriouſly, and of ſet purpoſe. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of his own method of purſuing conformity to Chriſt, tells us, he did in compariſon, count all things elſe loſs and dogs meat; he threw every thing elſe aſide. Then next he recounts with himſelf, *how far ſhort he was*; *Not as if I had already attained*, &c. (where by the way he intimates, that to ſtand ſtill and give over further endeavours, implies that groſs abſurdity, as if we thought our ſelves to have attained already, to be already perfect; are we not aſhamed to ſeem ſo conceited of our ſelves?), and then *ſtill as he did attain in this purſuit, he forgot what was behind*; and held on his courſe with freſs and conſtant vigor, ſtill reaching forth and preſſing on-ward towards his deſigned mark.

Phil. 3. 8, 9, 10. 12, 13.

In this great buſineſs we (alas) ſeem to dream. He that hath been obſerved ten or twenty years ago to be proud, and covetous,

or

or passionate, still remains so, and we apprehend not the incongruity of it. What, always learning, and yet never come to the knowledg of the truth, as it is in Jesus, to the putting off the old man, and putting on the new? Who would meddle with any profession upon such terms, to be always doing and yet to do nothing? Surely it must be imputed to this, we design not, we do not seriously intend the perfecting of holiness, to make a real progress in our way and work, and to get still nearer Heaven, as we draw nearer to the end of our days on Earth. We too contentedly confine our selves within certain limits, and aim not, as we should, at a spiritual excellency. This is the temper of many that have long troden the path of (at least an external) Religion; they will go but their own pace, and that within a self-prescribed round or circle. They perform their stated task of Religious exercises, and shun the grosser Vices of the time; and resolve never to go higher: Much like the Character that was once given of a great man *, that *he followed not the more eminent vertues*, and yet that *he hated vice*. And 'tis a true censure that a *Barbarian* * is said to have given of that middle temper, that dull indifferency: What is equally distant from being the matter either of Praise or Punishment, is upon no terms to be accounted a Vertue.

*Tiberius *Neque enim eminentes virtutes sectabatur, & rursum vitia oderat.* Tacit. Annal.

* *Thespesion.* Πᾶν γὰρ ὃ τιμᾶς τε, καὶ τιμωρίας ἴσον ἀφέστηκεν, οὕτω ἀρετὴ. *Philostr. in vit. Apollon. Tyan.*

At leaſt, we drive not on a deſign of growth and ſelf-improvement in our ſpiritual ſtates with that conſtancy we ought; we are off and on; our ſpirits are not ſteadily intent.

Gen. 49. 4. *We are unſtable as water, how can we excell?* God hath not put us, ſure, upon ſo fruitleſs a task, wherein our utmoſt labour and diligence ſhall profit nothing. Therefore ſtrive more vigorouſly, and pray with more earneſt importunity. Conſider and plead it with God, that he hath ſet before thee the hope of ſuch a ſtate, wherein thou art to be perfectly like him; and ſhalt thou (that muſt hereafter be like God) be now like a clod of earth. Thou art now a Child begotten of him; and though thou art yet in thy minority, yet may not ſomewhat be ſpared out of ſo fair an eſtate, hereafter deſigned for thee, as that thou may'ſt now live worthy of ſuch a Father, and ſutable to thy expected inheritance?

3. 3. And now, a contented ſatisfied temper of ſpirit, as I have told you, reſults from the other two; and will therefore follow of courſe upon growing knowledg of God and conformity to Him, as the latter of theſe alſo doth upon the former. Yea, 'tis a part of our conformity to God; but a part conſequent to the impreſſion of the things mentioned under the former head, (as knowledg alſo is a part previous and antecedent thereto) 'Tis in the ſtate of glory, we ſee, ſomething ſuperadded. The *likeneſs* impreſt is preſuppoſed; *Satisfaction* follows thereupon.

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The caſe is ſo too in our preſent ſtate; Contentment is ſpoken of as a thing conſequent and ſuperadded; *Godlineſs* with *Contentment*: A ſatisfied contented ſpirit, when 'tis the reſult of Godlineſs, (of the divine image impreſt), is indeed great gain. Yet as to this I ſhall only ſay theſe two things.

1. Be diſtinct and explicite in the propoſal of it as an end. Religion doth not brutifie men, but make them more rational. Its buſineſs is to guide them to bleſſedneſs. It muſt therefore pitch their eyes upon it, as the mark and end they are to aim at, and hold them intent there. 'Tis ingenuous, and honourable to God, that we ſhould expreſly avow it, We come to Him for ſatisfaction to our ſpirits, not knowing whither elſe to apply our ſelves. We turn our eyes upon Him; we lay open our Souls to receive impreſſions from Him, for this very end. This is an explicit acknowledgment of Him as God, our higheſt Soveraign good.

2. Actually apply and accommodate Divine Viſions and Communications to this purpoſe. Say, "O my Soul, now come ſo-"lace thy ſelf in this appearance of God; "come take thy allowed pleaſure in ſuch ex-"ertions of God as thou doſt now experi-"ence in thy ſelf. Recount thy happineſs; think how great it is, how rich thou art; on purpoſe that thy ſpirit may grow more, daily, into a ſatisfied contented frame. Often bethink thy ſelf, *What is the great God doing for me, that he thus reveals and imparts*

himſelf to my Soul! O how great things do thoſe preſent pledges preſignifie to me! That thou may'ſt ſtill more and more like thy portion, and account it ſaln in pleaſant places, ſo as never to ſeek ſatisfaction in things of another kind; though thou muſt ſtill continue expecting and deſiring more of the ſame kind.

And remember to this purpoſe, there cannot be a greater participation of the miſery of Hell before-hand, than a *diſcontented ſpirit perpetually reſtleſs and weary of its ſelf*; nor of the bleſſedneſs of Heaven, than in a *well-pleaſed, ſatisfied, contented frame of ſpirit.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

Rule 5. *Directing to raiſe our* Deſires *above the* actual *or* poſſible *attainments of this our preſent, and terminate them upon the future conſummate ſtate of Bleſſedneſs. The Rule explained and preſſed by ſundry Conſiderations.*

Rule 6. *That we add to a deſirous Purſuit, a joyful* Expectation *of this Bleſſedneſs: Which is purſued in certain ſubordinate Directions.*

5. *THat notwithſtanding all our preſent or poſſible attainments in this imperfect ſtate on earth, We direct fervent vigorous* deſires *towards the perfect and conſummate ſtate of glory it ſelf; Not deſigning to our ſelves a plenary ſatisfaction and reſt in any thing on this ſide of it.* 5 *Rule.*

That is, That *forgetting what is behind*, we reach forth not only to what is *immediately* before us; the next ſtep to be taken; but that our eye and deſire aim forward at the ultimate period of our race, terminate upon the eternal glory it ſelf; and that not only as a *meaſure*, according to which we

would some way *proportion our present attainments*, but as the very *mark*, *which (it self) we would fain hit and reach home to.*

And that this be not only the *habitual bent and tendency of our spirits*; but that we keep up such desires, in *frequent* (and as much as is possible) *continual exercise.*

Yea, and that such actual desires be not only faint and sluggish wishes, but full of lively efficacy and vigour; in some measure proportionable to our last end and highest good; beyond and above which we neither *esteem* nor *expect* any other enjoyment.

Whatsoever we may possibly attain to here, we should still be far from projecting to our selves a state of *rest* on this side *consummate glory*; but still urge our selves to a continual assent; so as to mount above, not only all enjoyments of any other kind, but all degrees of enjoyment in this kind, that are beneath perfection.

Still it must be remembred, this is not the state of our final rest. The Mass of Glory is yet in reserve, we are not yet so high as the highest Heavens.

If we gain but the top of Mount *Tabor*, we are apt to say, *'tis good to be here*, and forget the longer journey yet before us; loath to think of a further advance; when were our spirits right, how far so ever we may suppose our selves to have attained, it would be matter of continual joy to us to think, high perfections are still attainable; that we are yet capable of greater things,

than

than what we have hitherto compaſt; our Souls can yet comprehend more. Nature intends what is moſt perfect in every Creature; methinks the Divine Nature in the New Creature, ſhould not deſign lower, or ceaſe aſpiring, till it have attained its ultimate perfection, its culminating point; till Grace turn into Glory.

Let us therefore, Chriſtians, beſtir our ſelves; let us open and turn our eyes upon the *eternal glory*. Let's view it well, and then demand of our own Souls, Why are our deſires ſo faint and ſlothful? Why do they ſo ſeldom pierce through the intervening diſtance and reach home to what they profeſſedly level at; ſo rarely touch this bleſſed mark? How can we forbear to be angry with our ſelves, that ſo glorious an end ſhould not more powerfully attract; that our hearts ſhould not more ſenſibly find themſelves drawn; and all the powers of the Soul be ſet on work by the attractive power of that glory?

It certainly concerns us, not to ſit ſtill under ſo manifeſt a diſtemper. But if the *propoſal* of the object, the *diſcourſe* (all this while) of this bleſſed ſtate, do not move us to make ſome further trials with our ſelves, ſee what urging and reaſoning with our Souls, what rubbing and chafing our hearts will do. And there is a two-fold trial we may in this kind make upon our ſpirits: What the ſenſe of *Shame* will work with us; whether our hearts cannot be made ſenſible

to ſuppoſe how *vile* and wretched a temper it is, *to be undeſirous of glory.* And then what ſenſe of *Praiſe* can effect; or what impreſſion it may make upon us to conſider the *excellency* and worth, the high reaſonableneſs of that temper and poſture of Soul, which I am now perſwading to, [*a continual deſirouſneſs of that bleſſed glorious ſtate*].

1. 1. As to the former: Let us bethink our ſelves, can we anſwer it to God or to our own Souls, that we ſhould indulge our ſelves in a continual negligence of our eternal bleſſedneſs? A bleſſedneſs conſiſting in the Viſion and Participation of the Divine Glory?

Have we been dreaming all this while, that God hath been revealing to us this glorious ſtate, and ſetting this lovely proſpect before our eyes? Did it become us, not to open our eyes while he was opening Heaven to us, and repreſenting the ſtate which he deſigned to bring us to? Or will we ſay, we have ſeen it and yet deſire it not? Have we been deaf and dead while he hath been calling us into eternal glory? have all our ſenſes been bound up all this while? Hath he been ſpeaking all along to ſenſleſs Statues, to Stocks and Stones, while he expected reaſonable living Souls ſhould have received the voice, and have returned an obedient complying anſwer? And what anſwer could be expected to ſuch a call (a call to his Glory) below this, *We deſire it Lord, we would fain be there.*

And if we ſay, we have not been all this while

while aſleep, we ſaw the light that ſhone upon us, we heard the voice that called to us; Wherewith ſhall we then excuſe our ſelves, that our deſires were not mov'd, that our Souls were not preſently in a flame? Was it then, that we thought all a meer fiction; that we durſt not give credit to his word, when it brought us the report of the everlaſting Glory? Will we avow this? Is this that we will ſtand by? Or what elſe have we left to ſay? Have we a more plauſible reaſon to alledg, that the diſcovery of ſuch a glory mov'd us not to deſire it, than that we believed it not? Sure this is the truth of our caſe. We ſhould feel this heavenly fire always burning in our breaſts, if our Infidelity did not quench the coal. If we did believe, we could not but deſire. But doth not the thoughts of this ſhake our very Souls, and fill us with horror and trembling? We, that ſhould be turn'd into indignation, and ready to burn our ſelves with our own flame, and all about us, if one ſhould give us the lie; that we ſhould dare to put the lie upon the *Eternal Truth!* upon Him whoſe Word gave ſtability and being to the World, who made and ſuſtains all things by it! *That awful Word!* That Word that ſhivers Rocks and melts down Mountains, that makes the inanimate Creation tremble, that can in a moment blaſt all things and diſſolve the frame of Heaven and Earth, (which in the mean time it upholds), Is that become with us fabulous lying Breath! Thoſe God-

breath'd

breath'd Oracles, thoſe Heavenly Records, which diſcover and deſcribe this bleſſed ſtate, Are they falſe and fooliſh Legends? Muſt that be pretended at laſt (if men durſt) that is ſo totally void of all pretence? What ſhould be the gain or advantage accrewing to that Eternal, All-ſufficient being? What acceſſion ſhould be made to that infinite ſelf-fulneſs by deluding a Worm? Were it conſiſtent with his *Nature*; What could be his *deſign* to put a cheat upon poor mortal duſt? If thou dare not impute it to *him*; ſuch a deception had a beginning, but what Author canſt thou imagine of it, or what end? Did it proceed from a *good mind* or a *bad*? Could a *good* and honeſt mind form ſo horribly wicked a deſign, to impoſe an univerſal deluſion and lie upon the World, in the name of the true and holy God? Or could a *wicked* mind frame a deſign ſo directly level'd againſt *wickedneſs*? Or is there any thing ſo aptly and naturally tending to form the World to ſobriety, holineſs, purity of converſation, as the diſcovery of this future ſtate of Glory? And ſince the belief of future felicity is known to obtain *univerſally* among men, Who could be the Author of ſo *common* a deception? If thou hadſt the mind to impoſe a lie upon all the World, what courſe would'ſt thou take? How would'ſt thou lay the deſign? Or why doſt thou in this caſe *imagine* what thou knoweſt not how to *imagine*? And doſt thou not without ſcruple believe many things of which thou never had'ſt

ſo

ſo unqueſtionable evidence? Or muſt *thou Faith*, which is the foundation of thy Religion and eternal hopes, be the moſt ſuſpected ſhaking thing with thee; and have, of all other, the leaſt ſtability and rootedneſs in thy Soul? If thou canſt not excuſe thy *infidelity*, be aſhamed of thy ſo cold and ſluggiſh deſires of this glorious ſtate.

And doth it not argue a low ſordid ſpirit, not to deſire and aim at the perfection thou art capable of; not to deſire that bleſſedneſs which alone is ſutable and ſatisfying to a reaſonable and ſpiritual being? Bethink thy ſelf a little; How low art thou ſunk into the dirt of the earth? How art thou plunged into the miry ditch, that even thine own clothes might abhor thee? Is the Father of Spirits thy Father? Is the World of Spirits thy Country? Haſt thou any relation to that Heavenly Progeny? Art thou ally'd to that bleſſed Family; And yet undeſirous of the ſame bleſſedneſs? Canſt thou favour nothing, but what ſmells of the Earth? Is nothing grateful to thy Soul, but what is corrupted by ſo vicious and impure a tincture? Are all thy delights centred in a dunghill; and the polluted pleaſures of a filthy World better to thee than the eternal viſions and enjoyments of Heaven? What, art thou all made of Earth? Is thy Soul ſtupifi'd into a Clod? Haſt thou no ſenſe with thee of any thing better and more excellent? Canſt thou look upon no glorious thing with a pleaſed eye? Are things only deſirable and lovely to thee,

as

as they are deformed? O conſider the corrupted diſtempered ſtate of thy ſpirit; and how vile a diſpoſition it hath contracted to it ſelf. Thine looks too like the *Mundane Spirit*; the *Spirit of the World*. The Apoſtle ſpeaks of it (διακριτικῶς) by way of diſtinction; *We have not received the ſpirit of the world, but the Spirit that is from God, that we might know*, or *ſee* (and no doubt 'tis deſire that animates that eye; 'tis not bare ſpeculative intuition and no more) *the things freely given us of God.* Surely he whoſe deſire doth not guide his eye to the beholding of thoſe things, hath received the Spirit of the World only. A Spirit that conforms him to this World, makes him think only thoughts of this World, and drive the deſigns of this World, and ſpeak the language of this World. A Spirit that connaturalizes him to the World, makes him of a temper ſutable to it: He breathes only worldly breath, carries a worldly aſpect, is of a worldly converſation. O poor low ſpirit, that ſuch a World ſhould with-hold thee from the deſire and purſuit of ſuch Glory! Art thou not aſhamed to think, what thy deſires are wont to pitch upon, while they decline and wave this bleſſedneſs? Methinks thy very *ſhame* ſhould compel thee to quit the name of a *Saint* or a *Man*: To forbear numbring thy ſelf with any that pretend to immortality; and go ſeek Paſture among the Beaſts of the Field, with them that live that low animal life that thou doſt, and expect no other.

1 Cor. 2. 12. εἰδῶμεν.

And

And while thou ſo falleſt in with the World, how highly doſt thou gratifie the pretending and uſurping god of it? The great fomentor of the ſenſual worldly genius; *The Spirit it ſelf that works in the children of diſobedience*, and makes them follow the courſe of the World; holds them faſt bound in worldly luſts, and *leads them captive at his will*; cauſes them after his own Serpentine manner) to creep and crawl in the duſt of the Earth. He is moſt intimate to this apoſtate World; informs it (as it were) and actuates it in every part; is even one great Soul to it. *The whole world lies in that wicked one*, (as the body, by beſt Philoſophers, is ſaid to be in the Soul). The world is ſaid to be *convicted* when *he* is judged. He having fall'n from a ſtate of bleſſedneſs in God, hath involv'd the world with himſelf in the ſame Apoſtacy and Condemnation; and labours to keep them faſt in the bands of death. The great Redeemer of Souls makes this his buſineſs, *to looſe and diſſolve the work of the Devil.* With that wicked one thou complyeſt againſt thy own Soul and the Redeemer of it, while thou neglecteſt to deſire and purſue this bleſſedneſs. This is thy debaſement, and his triumph; thy vile ſuccumbency gives him the day and his will upon thee. He deſires no more than that he may ſuppreſs in thee all heavenly deſires, and keep thee thus a ſlave and a priſoner (confin'd in thy ſpirit to this low dark dungeon) by thy own conſent. While thou

Eph. 2. 2, 3

1 Joh. 5. 19.

Joh. 16.

1 Joh. 3. 8.

remain-

remainest without desire after Heaven, he is secure of thee, as knowing then thou wilt take no other way, but what will bring thee unto the same eternal state with himself in the end. He is jealous over thee, that thou direct not a desire, nor glance an eye Heaven-ward: While thou dost not so, thou art entirely subject, and givest as full obedience to him, as thy God requires to himself in order to thy blessedness. But is it a thing tolerable to thy thoughts, that thou should'st yeild that heart-obedience to the Devil against God?

And this being the state of thy case, what more significant expression canst thou make of thy contempt of Divine goodness? O the Love that thou neglectest, while the most glorious issue and product of it, is with thee an undesired thing! Yea this the thing it self speaks, were there no such competition. What, that when eternal love hath conceived, and is travelling to bring forth such a birth; that when it invites thee to an expectation of such glory shortly to be reveal'd, the result of so deep counsels and wonderful works, this should be the return from thee, I desire it not? Is this thy gratitude to the Father of Glory, the requital of the kindness, yea, and of the blood of thy Redeemer? If this blessedness were not desirable for it self, methinks the Offerers hand should be a sufficient endearment. But thou canst not so divide or abstract, it consists in beholding and bearing his Glorious likeness who invites thee

thee to it; and therefore in the neglect of it, thou moſt highly affronteſt him.

Yea further, is it not a monſtrous unnaturalneſs towards thy ſelf, as well as impiety towards God, not to deſire that perfect final bleſſedneſs? Doth not every thing naturally tend to its ultimate perfection and proper end? What creature would not witneſs againſt thee, if thou neglect, in thine own capacity and kind, to aim at thine? Surely thou canſt not allow thy ſelf to think any thing beneath *this*, worthy to be owned by thee, under that notion, of thy higheſt good and thy laſt end. But that thy ſpirit ſhould labour under an averſion towards thy higheſt good, towards thy bleſſedneſs it ſelf, is not that a diſmal token upon thee? If thou didſt diſaffect and nauſeate the things in which thy preſent life is bound up, and without which thou can'ſt not live, wouldſt thou not think thy caſe deplorate? What doſt thou think will become of thy Soul, whoſe everlaſting life is bound up in that very good which thou *deſireſt not*; which cannot live that life without that good, nor with it, if thou haſt no deſire to it? O the Eternal Reſentments thy Soul will have of this cruelty! To be with-held from that wherein its life lies! Would'ſt thou not judg him unnatural, that ſhould kill his Brother, aſſaſſine his Father, ſtarve his Child? What ſhall be ſaid of him that deſtroys himſelf? How may that Soul lament, that ever it was thine; and ſay, O that I had rather been of any ſuch lower kind,

kind, to have animated a Fly, to have inſpirited a vile Worm, rather than to have ſerv'd a reaſonable Beaſt, that by me knew the good it would never follow, and did not deſire! But if thou haſt any ſuch deſires, in a low degree, after this bleſſedneſs; as thou thinkeſt may entitle thee to the name thou beareſt, of a *Saint*, a *Chriſtian*; Is it not ſtill very unnatural to purſue a *good*, approved by thy ſtated judgment as *beſt in it ſelf* and *for* thee, with ſo unproportionable, ſo ſlothful deſires? For the ſame reaſon thou doſt deſire it at all, thou ſhould'ſt deſire it *much*; yea, and ſtill more and more, till thou attain it, and be ſwallowed up into it. Thy *beſt* and *laſt good* thou canſt never deſire too much.

And let it be conſidered by thee, that the temper thou thinkeſt thy ſelf innocent of [*an habitual prevalent diſaffection to the true bleſſedneſs of Saints*], may, *for ought thou knoweſt*, be upon thee; while it *appears*, thou art ſo very near the borders of it; and *it appears not*, with ſuch certainty, that thou partakeſt not in it. It is not ſo eaſie a matter, critically to diſtinguiſh and conclude of the loweſt degree (*in Hypotheſi*, or with application to thy own caſe) of that deſire which is neceſſary to qualifie thee for the *enjoyment* of this bleſſedneſs. And is it not a matter both of *ſhame* and terror, that thou ſhould'ſt deſire *thy bleſſedneſs* ſo faintly, as not to know whether thou truly deſire it at all? 'Tis true, that a certainty, amongſt ſuch as may be ſincere, is very little common; but whence proceeds

ceeds it, but from their too common indulged ſloth; out of which all this is deſigned to awaken thee. And the commonneſs whereof doth as little detract from the reproach and *ſinfulneſs*, as from the danger of it. 'Tis but a poor defence, for what is *intrinſically evil* in it ſelf, that it is *common.*

But further, as the caſe is, this is ſo reproachful a thing, even in common eſtimate, [*not to deſire Heaven and Eternal Glory, or to deſire it with very cold and careleſs deſires*], that there are few will profeſs it, or own it to be their temper; much fewer that will undertake to excuſe or juſtifie it. 'Tis ſo evilly thought of, that among meerly ſober and rational men, it can never find an Advocate, or any that will afford it Patronage. The generality pretend a deſire of going to Heaven and being with God. If any be ſo obſervant of themſelves as to know, and ſo ingenuous as to confeſs it otherwiſe with them, they complain of it as their fault, and ſay, they would fain have it redreſt, but are far from aſſuming that confidence, to defend or plead for it. Conſider then, Wilt thou perſiſt in ſuch a temper and diſpoſition of mind as all men condemn; and be guilty of ſo odious a thing, as ſhall be cenſured and blamed by the common concurrent vote and judgment of mankind? Thou would'ſt be aſhamed to ſtand forth and profeſs openly to men, that thou deſireſt an earthly felicity more than a bleſſedneſs in Heaven; or at leaſt, that thou art ſo indifferent, and the

Scales hang ſo even with thee, that thou canſt hardly tell which way they incline moſt: And art thou not aſhamed that this ſhould be thy uſual temper; how much ſoever thou conceal it from the notice and obſervation of the World?

Moreover, how can it eſcape thy ſerious reflection, That if thou pretend it otherwiſe with thee, 'tis but to add one ſin to another, and cover thy Carnality with Hypocriſie and Diſſimulation? Yea, while thou continueſt in that temper of ſpirit, not to deſire this bleſſedneſs as thy ſupreme end, the *whole* of thy Religion is but an empty ſhew, an artificial diſguiſe; it carries an appearance and pretence, as if thou waſt aiming at God and Glory, while thy heart is ſet another way, and the bent of thy Soul ſecretly carries thee a counter-courſe. Hath not *Religion* an aſpect towards *Bleſſedneſs?* What mean thy Praying, thy Hearing, thy Sacramental Communion, if thou have not a deſign for Eternal Glory? What makeſt thou in this *way*, if thou have not thy heart ſet towards this *end?*

Nor is it more diſhoneſt and unjuſt, than it is fooliſh and abſurd, That the diſpoſition and tendency of thy Soul ſhould be directly contrary to the only deſign of the Religion thou profeſſeſt and doſt externally practiſe. Thy profeſſion and deſires are nothing but ſelf-contradiction. Thou act continually running counter to thy ſelf; outwardly purſuing what thou inwardly declineſt. Thy *real end*

(which

(which can be no other than what thou *really deſireſt* and ſetteſt thy heart upon) and thy *viſible way* are quite contrary: So that while thou continueſt the courſe of Religion, in which thou art engaged, having taken down from before thine eyes the end which thou ſhould'ſt be aiming at, and which alone Religion can aptly ſubſerve, Thy Religion hath no deſign or end at all, (none at leaſt which thou would'ſt not be aſhamed to profeſs and own). Indeed this temper of heart I am now pleading againſt, and *undeſirouſneſs* or *indifferency of ſpirit* towards the eternal glory, renders Religion the vaineſt thing in the World. For whereas all the other actions of our lives have their ſtated proper ends; Religion hath, in this caſe, none at all; none to which it hath any deſignation in its nature, or any aptneſs to ſubſerve. This monſtrous abſurdity it infers, (and how ſtrange is it, that it ſhould not be reflected on?), That whereas if you ask any man of common underſtanding, *what he doth this or that action for*, eſpecially if they be *ſtated actions*, done by him in an ordinary courſe, he can readily tell you, *for ſuch and ſuch an end*: But ask him why he continues any practice of Religion, he cannot ſay (in this caſe) for what.

For can any man imagine what other end Religion naturally ſerves for, but to bring men to bleſſedneſs? Which being no other thing than what hath been here deſcribed; ſuch as are found not to deſire it really and

ſupremely, as their end, can have no *real attainable end* of their being religious at all. To drive on a continued courſe and ſeries of actions in a viſible purſuit of that which they deſire not, and have no mind to, is ſuch a piece of folly, ſo fond and vain a trifling, that, as I remember, *Cicero* reports, *Cato* to have ſaid concerning the South-ſayers of his time, *he did wonder they could look in one anothers faces and not laugh*, (being conſcious to each others impoſtures, and the vanity of their profeſſion); ſo one would as juſtly wonder, that the generality of carnal men, (who may ſhrewdly gueſs at the temper of one anothers minds) do not laugh at each other, that they are jointly engaged in ſuch exerciſes of Religion, to the deſign whereof the common and agreed temper of their ſpirits do ſo little correſpond. As if all were in very good earneſt for Heaven, when each one knows for himſelf, and may (poſſibly with more *Truth* than *Charity*) ſuppoſe of the reſt, that if they might always continue in their earthly ſtations, they had rather never come there. And therefore that they deſire it not *ſupremely*, and ſo not as their end at all; conſider it then, that thy no-deſire of this bleſſed ſtate quite diſſpirits thy Religion, utterly raviſhes away its Soul, leaves it a dead, fooliſh, vain thing, renders it an *idle impertinency*, not a *mean* to a valuable *end*. This *deſire* is the life of Religion: All duties and exerciſes of piety are without it, but empty Formalities, Solemn pieces of Pageantry; every

ry ſervice done to God, but the *Sacrifice of a Fool*, if not animated by the deſire of final bleſſedneſs in him, and be not part of our way thither, a means deſigned to the attainment of it; which nothing can be, that we are not put upon by the vertue of the *deſired end*. Without this Religion is not it ſelf. A continuance in well-doing, is as it were the Body of it; and therein, a *ſeeking honor, glory, and immortality*, the Soul and Spirit. The *deſire* of an *Heavenly Country* muſt run through the whole courſe of our *Earthly Pilgrimage*: It were otherwiſe a continued error, an uncertain wandring, no ſteady tending towards our end: So that thou art a meer Vagrant, if this *deſire* do not direct thy courſe towards thy Fathers houſe. And methinks all this ſhould make thee even *aſhamed* of thy ſelf, if thou canſt not find this *deſire* to have a ſettled reſidence and a ruling power in thy Soul. Then,

2. *Senſe of Praiſe* ſhould ſignifie ſomething too, as the Apoſtle, *Whatſoever things are--- pure, lovely*, &c. *If there be any vertue,--- any praiſe, think of theſe things.* And hath not the eternal glory thoſe Characters upon it of *purity* and *lovelineſs* beyond all things? Is it not a *laudable* and *praiſe-worthy* thing, to have a mind and heart ſet upon *that?* 2.

The bleſſed God puts a note of excellency upon this temper of ſpirit: *But they deſire a better Country, that is, an heavenly; where-* Heb. 11. *fore God is not aſhamed to be called their* 16. *God*, &c. This renders them a people *wor-*

1 Theſ. 2. 12. *thy of him who hath called them to his kingdom and glory*; fit for him to own a relation to. Had they been of low terrene ſpirits, he would have accounted it a ſhame to him, to have gone under the name and cogniſance of their God. But in as much as they *deſire* the Heavenly Country, have learned to trample this terreſtrial World, cannot be contained within this lower Sphere, nor ſatisfie themſelves in earthly things; they now diſcover a *certain excellency of ſpirit*, in reſpect whereof, God is not aſhamed to own a relation to them, before all the World to be called their God; to let men ſee what account he makes of ſuch a Spirit.

Yea, this is the proper genuine ſpirit and temper of a Saint, which agrees to him as he is ſuch. He is begotten to the eternal inheritance. A diſpoſition (and therein a *deſire*) to it is in his very nature, (the new nature he hath received), implanted there from his original. He is born Spirit of Spirit, and by that birth, is not intituled only, but *adapted* and ſuted alſo to that pure and ſpiritual ſtate of bleſſedneſs. That grace by the appearance whereof men are made Chriſtians teaches alſo, inſtructs to this very thing, *to look for this bleſſed hope, the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt*. That which you know conſummates that bleſſedneſs. *For when Chriſt, who is their life, ſhall appear, then ſhall they alſo appear with him in glory*; by the participation of the divine nature, their ſpirits eſcape and get up above

above this corrupt impure World. That new nature is a holy flame that carries their hearts upwards towards heaven.

Further, *Such deſires* appear hence to be of *divine original*, an infuſion from the bleſſed God himſelf. That nature is from him immediately in which they are implanted. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of his earnest panting deſire, to *have mortality ſwallowed up of life*, 2 Cor. 5. 4. preſently adds, *He that wrought us to the ſelf-ſame thing is God.*

They are *obedient deſires*. The Souls preſent *anſwer* to the heavenly Call, by which Heb. 3. 1. God calls it to his Kingdom and Glory. This glory is (as hath been formerly noted) the very term of that calling. *The God of all grace hath called us into his eternal glory by Chriſt Jeſus.* 1 Thes. 2. 12. 1 Pet. 5. 12. The glorified ſtate is *the mark, the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt.* Phil. 3. 14. 'Tis the matter of the Apoſtles thanksgiving unto God, on the behalf of the *Theſſalonians*, that *they were called by his Goſpel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* 2 Thes. 2. 13. When the Soul deſires this glory, it obediently anſwers this call. This is a compliance and ſubjection of heart to it. How lovely and becoming a thing is this, when God touches the heart with a ſtamp and impreſs of glory, and it forthwith turns it ſelf to that very point, and ſtands directly bent towards the ſtate of glory; is not wayward or perverſe, but herein yeilds it ſelf to God, and complies with the divine pleaſure.

Such *deſires* have much in them of a *child-like ingenuity*; to deſire the ſight of a *Fathers face*; when this is the intimate ſenſe of the Soul, *Shew me the Father and it ſuffices.* To deſire the fulleſt conformity to his nature and will, to be perfect as that heavenly Father is perfect, what doth better become a Child?

They are *generous deſires*; they aim at perfection, the higheſt that created nature is capable of; not contented to have had ſome glances of divine glory, ſome ſtroaks and lines of his image, but aſpiring to full-ey'd viſions, a perfect likeneſs.

They are *victorious deſires*; they (as it were) ride in triumph over the World and every ſublunary thing; they muſt be ſuppoſed to have conquered ſenſual inclinations, to have got the maſtery over terrene diſpoſitions and affections. With what holy contempt and ſcorn of every earthly thing doth that lofty Soul quit this dirty World and aſcend, that is powerfully carried by its own *deſire* towards that bleſſed ſtate? The *deſire* of ſuch a knowledg of Chriſt, as might transform into his likeneſs, and paſs the Soul through all degrees of conformity to him, till it attain the reſurrection of the dead, and become like a riſen glorified Jeſus; Such a *deſire* I ſay, if it make all things ſeem as loſs and dung in compariſon, (even a formal ſpiritleſs Religion it ſelf), will it not render this World the moſt deſpicable Dunghill of all the reſt? Try ſuch a Soul if you can, tempt

it

it down, to enjoy a *flattering, kind world*, or to pleaſe it when *angry* and *unkind*. When *deſires* after this glory are once awakn'd into an active lively vigor, when the fire is kindled, and the flame aſcends, and this refined ſpirit is joyfully aſcending therein, See if you can draw it back and make it believe this World a more regardable thing. Why ſhould not all thoſe conſiderations make thee in love with this bleſſed frame of ſpirit, and reſtleſs till thou find thy ſelf uncapable of being ſatisfied with any thing but divine likeneſs.

6. That while we cannot as yet attain the mark *and* end *of our* Deſires, *we yeild not to a comfortleſs deſpondency in the way, but maintain in our hearts a* lively joy, *in the* hope *that hereafter we ſhall attain it.* 6 *Rule.*

We are not all this while perſwading to the *deſire* and *purſuit* of an unattainable good. Spiritual *deſires* are alſo rational, and do therefore involve *hope* with them; and that hope ought to *infer* and *cherish* joy. Hopeleſs deſire is full of torment, and muſt needs baniſh joy from that breaſt which it hath got the poſſeſſion of. 'Tis a diſconſolate thing, to deſire what we muſt never expect to enjoy, and are utterly unlikely ever to compaſs. But theſe deſires are part of the *new creature*, which is not of ſuch a compoſition, as to have a principle of endleſs trouble and diſquiet in it ſelf. The Father of mercies is not ſo little merciful to his own Child, to lay it under

der a neceſſity, *from its very natural conſtitution*, of being for ever miſerable by the deſire of that which it can never have. It had been very unlike the workmanſhip of God, to make a Creature to which it ſhould be *neceſſary to deſire* and *impoſſible to enjoy* the ſame thing.

No: But as he hath given holy Souls, (as to the preſent caſe), great *incentives* of deſire, ſo doth he afford them proportionable *encouragements* of *hope* alſo; and that *hope* intervening, can very well reconcile *deſire* and *joy*, and lodg them together in the ſame boſom. So that as it is a thing capable of no excuſe, to hear of this bleſſedneſs and not deſire it; ſo it would be, to deſire and not expect it, to expect it and not rejoice in it, even while we are under that expectation. And it muſt be a very raiſed joy that ſhall anſwer to the expectation of ſo great things. If one ſhould give a ſtranger to Chriſtianity an account of the Chriſtian Hopes, and tell him what they expect to *be* and *enjoy* e're long; he would ſure promiſe himſelf, to find ſo many Angels dwelling in human fleſh, and reckon, when he came among them he ſhould be as amidſt the heavenly Quire; every one full of joy and praiſe. He would expect to find us living on *earth*, as the inhabitants of *heaven*, as ſo many pieces of immortal glory lately dropt down from above, and ſhortly again returning thither. He would look to find, every where in the Chriſtian World, incarnate glory ſparkling through the over-ſha-

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dowing vail; and wonder how this earthly Sphere should be able to contain so many great Souls.

But when he draws nearer to us, and observes the course and carriage of our lives; when he sees us walk as other men, and considers the strange disagreement of our daily Conversation to our so great avowed Hopes, and how little sense of joy and pleasure we discover our selves to conceive in them; Would he not be ready to say, "Sure some "or other (willing only to amuse the World "with the noise of strange things) have com-"posed a Religion for these men, which they "themselves understand nothing of. If they "do adopt and own it for theirs, they un-"derstand not their own pretences; they are "taught to speak some big words, or to "give a faint or seeming assent to such as "speak them in their names; but 'tis impos-"sible they should be in good earnest, or be-"lieve themselves in what they say and pro-"fess.

And what reply then should we be able to make? For who can think, that any who acknowledg a God, and understand at all what that name imports, should value at so low a rate, as we (visibly) do, the eternal fruition of his Glory and a present Sonship to him, the pledg of so great an hope.

He that is born Heir to great Honours and Possessions, though he be upon great uncertainties as to the enjoyment of them, (for how many interveniencies may prevent him?), yet

yet when he comes to underſtand his poſſibilities and expectancies, How big doth he look and ſpeak? What grandeur doth he put on? His Hopes form his ſpirit and deportment. But is it proportionably ſo with us? Do our Hopes fill our hearts with joy, our mouths with praiſe, and cloath our faces with a chearful aſpect, and make an holy alacrity appear in all our converſations?

But let not the deſign of this Diſcourſe be miſtaken. 'Tis not a preſumptuous confidence I would encourage, nor a vain oſtentation, nor a diſdainful over-looking of others whom we fancy our ſelves to excel. Such things hold no proportion with a Chriſtian ſpirit. His is a modeſt humble exultation, a ſerious ſevere joy; ſutable to his ſolid ſtable Hope, His ſpirit is not puſt up and ſwoll'n with air, 'tis not big by an inflation, or a light and windy tumor; but 'tis really fill'd with effectual pre-apprehenſions of a weighty glory. His joy accordingly exerts its ſelf with a ſteady lively vigor, equally removed from vain lightneſs and ſtupidity, from conceitedneſs, and inſenſibleneſs of his bleſſed ſtate. He forgets not that he is leſs than the leaſt of Gods mercies, but diſowns not his title to the greateſt of them. He abaſes himſelf to the duſt, in the ſenſe of his own vileneſs; but in the admiration of Divine Grace, he riſes as high as Heaven. In his humiliation he affects to equal himſelf with Worms, in his joy and praiſe with Angels. He is never unwilling

ling to diminiſh himſelf, but afraid of detracting any thing from the love of God, or the iſſues of that love.

But moſt of all he magnifies (as he hath cauſe) this its laſt and moſt perfect iſſue. And by how much he apprehends his own unworthineſs, he is the more rapt up into a wondering joy, that ſuch bleſſedneſs ſhould be his deſigned portion.

But now, how little do we find in our ſelves of this bleſſed frame of ſpirit? How remote are we from it? Let us but enquire a little into our own Souls: Are there not too apparent ſymptoms with us of the little joy we take in the fore-thoughts of future bleſſedneſs? For,

Firſt, How few thoughts have we of it? What any delight in, they remember often. 'Tis ſaid of the ſame perſon, that *his delight is in the Law of the Lord*, and that *in his Law he doth meditate day and night.* And when the Pſalmiſt profeſſes his own *delight in Gods ſtatutes*, he adds, *I will not forget thy Word.* Should we not be as unapt to *forget* Heaven, if our *delight* were there? But do not days paſs with us, wherein we can allow our ſelves no leiſure to mind the eternal glory; when yet vanities throng in upon us, without any obſtruction or check? Pſal. 1. 2. Pſal. 119. 16.

And, (what is conſequent hereupon), How ſeldom is this bleſſed ſtate the ſubject of our diſcourſe? How often do Chriſtians meet, and not a word of Heaven? O heavy carnal

carnal hearts! Our home and eternal bleſſedneſs, in this, appears to be forgotten among us. How often may a perſon converſe with us, e're he underſtand our relation to the Heavenly Country? If Exiles meet in a foreign Land, what pleaſant diſcourſe have they of home? They ſuffer not one another to forget it. Such was *their remembrance of Sion*, who ſate together bemoaning themſelves by the Rivers of *Babylon*, *a making mention of it*, (as the Phraſe is often uſed). And methinks (even as to this remembrance) it ſhould be our common reſolution too. *If we forget thee, O Jeruſalem; If we forget to make mention of thee, O thou City of the living God; Let our right hand forget her cunning; our tongue ſhall ſooner cleave to the roof of our mouth*; and ſo it would be, did we prefer that Heavenly Jeruſalem above our *chief joy*.

Again, How little doth it weigh with us? It ſerves not to out-weigh the ſmalleſt trouble; if we have not our carnal deſire in every thing gratified, if any thing fall out croſs to our inclinations, this glory goes for nothing with us. Our diſcontents ſwallow up our hopes and joys; and heaven is reckon'd as a thing of nought. If when *outward* troubles afflict or threaten us, we could have the certain proſpect of better days, *that* would *ſenſibly revive* and pleaſe us. Yea, can we not pleaſe our ſelves with very uncertain groundleſs hopes of this kind, without promiſe or valuable reaſon? But to be told of a recompence at the reſurrection of the juſt, of a day when

when *we shall see the face of God, and be satisfied with his likeness*; this is insipid and without savour to us, and affords us but cold comfort. The uncertain things of time, signifie more with us, than the certain things of eternity. Can we think 'tis all this while well with us? Can we think this a tolerable evil, or suffer with patience such a distemper of spirit? Methinks it should make us even weary of our selves and solicitous for an effectual speedy redress.

The redress must be more in our *own doing*, (striving with our Souls and with God for them) than in what *any man can say*. Most of the considerations under the foregoing Rule, are with little variation applicable to this present purpose. I shall here annex only some few subordinate directions; which may lead us into this blessed state of life, and give us some joyful foretasts of the future blessedness, according as our spirits shall comply with them. But expect not to be cured by prescriptions, without using them; or that heavenly joy can be the creature of mortal unregarded breath; we can only prescribe means and methods through which God may be pleased to descend, and in which thou art diligently to insist and wait. And because I cannot well suppose thee ignorant, where much is said to this purpose; I shall therefore say little.

1. *Pos-*

1. 1. *Poſſeſs thy Soul with the apprehenſion, that thou art not at liberty in this matter*; but that there is a certain *ſpiritual delectation*, which is incumbent on thee as indiſpenſable duty. Some whoſe moroſer tempers do more eſtrange them from delights, think themſelves more eſpecially concern'd, to baniſh every thing of that kind from their Religion, and phanſie it only to conſiſt in ſowre and rigorous ſeverities. Others ſeem to think it arbitrary and indifferent; or that, if they live in a continual ſadneſs and dejection of ſpirit, 'tis only their infelicity, not their fault; and apprehend not the obligation that is upon them, by a divine Law, otherwiſe to mannage and order their ſpirits. But what then? Are ſuch words thought to be ſpoken at random, *Her ways are ways of pleaſantneſs. The Lord is the portion of mine Inheritance. The Lines are fall'n to me in pleaſant places*, (or, *in the midſt of pleaſantneſſes*, as the expreſſion hath been noted to ſignifie)? Do ſuch Precepts carry no ſenſe with them; *Delight thy ſelf in the Lord.---Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I ſay, rejoice*; with many more? Do all paſſages of this kind in Scripture ſtand for Cyphers, or were they put in them by chance? Is there ſuch a thing as an aptitude to delectation in our *natures*; and doth the *ſanctification* thereof entitle the *joy of Saints* to a place among the *fruits of the Spirit*; and yet is the exerciſe of it to have no place in their hearts and practice? Do not think you are permitted

Prov. 3. 17.

Pſal. 37. 4.

Phil. 4. 4.

Gal. 5. 22.

ted ſo to extinguiſh or truſtrate ſo conſiderable a principle of the Divine Life. Know, that the due exerciſe of it is a part of the order and diſcipline of Gods Family. That it is a conſtitution of the divine Goodneſs and Wiſdom both to cheriſh his *own* and invite in *ſtrangers* to him; yea, that is the ſcope and aim of the whole Goſpel-revelation, that what is diſcovered to us of the word of life, was purpoſely written to draw Souls into fellowſhip with the Father and the Son, that their *joy might be full.* That the Miniſters of this Goſpel are therefore ſtiled the *Helpers of their joy.* Therefore, though here it be not required nor allowed, that you ſhould indulge a vain trifling levity or a ſenſual joy, or that you ſhould rejoice you know not why, (imitating the laughter of a fool), or inopportunely, when your *ſtate* admits it not or when the Lord *calls to mourning*; yet ſettle however this perſwaſion in your hearts; that the ſerious, rational, regular, ſeaſonable exerciſe of *delight* and *joy* is matter of duty, to be charged upon conſcience, from the authority of God; and is an integral part in the Religion of Chriſtians. And then ſure you will not think any object more proper and ſutable for it to be exerciſed upon, than the foreſeen ſtate of bleſſedneſs, which is in it ſelf a *fulneſs of joy*; *the joy of our Lord.* And is, in the pre-apprehenſions of it, a more conſiderable matter of joy than our preſent ſtate affords us beſides; and without relation whereto,

1 Joh. 1. 4. 2 Cor. 4.

Pſal. 16. Mat. 25.

we have no matter of rational joy at all.

2. 2. *Keep Faith in exerciſe*; both in that act of it which *perſwades* the Soul of the truth of the Goſpel-revelation, and that act of it which *unites* it to God through the Mediator. The Apoſtle prays on the behalf of his *Roman* Chriſtians, that they might be
Rom. 15. 13. *filled with joy and peace in believing*; and we are told, how effectually (as to this) it ſupply'd the place of *ſight*. Such as had not *ſeen* Chriſt, (which was the priviledg of many other Chriſtians of that time), yet *be-*
1 Pet. 1. 8. *lieving*, *did rejoice with joy unſpeakable and glorious*.

Faith directly tends, in that double office before-mentioned, to excite and foment this joy. As it aſſents to the truth of the Goſpel-revelation, it reallizes the object, is the
Heb. 11. 1. ſubſtance and evidence of the inviſible glory. As it unites the Soul with God through Chriſt, in a *fiducial* and *obediential* cloſure, it aſcertains our intereſt therein, and is our actual acceptance of our Bleſſedneſs it ſelf; for when we take God through Chriſt to be our God, what is it, but to accept him as our eternal and ſatisfying portion, whom we are after fully to enjoy, in the viſion and participation of his glorious excellencies and infinite fulneſs? Which two acts of Faith we have mentioned together in one Text, ---they were *perſwaded* of the Promiſes and *embraced* them; the former reſpecting the *truth* of the promiſe, the latter the *goodneſs* of the thing promiſed. And hereupon they con-

confeſſed themſelves (as it follows) Pilgrims and Strangers on earth; which abdication of the earth, as none of their Country could not be, but that through their faith they had a joyous pre-apprehenſion of that better ſtate. That confeſſion did manifeſtly involve in it a *lively joy*, ſpringing from the ſight and embrace of that more taking diſtant good which the promiſe preſented them with; whence they could not think it enough, to be ſuch to themſelves in their own thoughts and the temper of their minds; but they cannot forbear (ſo overcoming were their ſights and taſts) to give it out, to ſpeak, and look, and live, as thoſe that were carried up in their ſpirits above this earth, and who did even diſdain to own themſelves in any other relation to it, than that of Foreigners and Strangers.

Set thy Faith on work, Soul, and keep it a work, and thou wilt find this no riddle; it will be ſo with thee too; we have much talk of Faith among us, and have the name often in our mouths, but how few are the real lively Believers? Is it to be thought, that ſuch Bleſſedneſs ſhould not more affect our hearts; nay, would it not raviſh away our very Souls, did we throughly believe it? And were it our preſent daily work, to renew the bonds of a vital union with the bleſſed God, in whom we expect to be bleſſed for ever, Could that be without previous guſts of pleaſure? 'Tis not talking of Faith but living by it, that will give

us the experience of heavenly delights and joys.

3. 3. *Take heed of going in thy practice against thy light*; of persisting in a course of known or suspected sin, that states thee in a direct hostility and rebellion against heaven; and can never suffer thee to think of eternity and the other world with comfort, will fill thy mind with frightful apprehensions of God, render the sight of his face the most terrible thing to thy thoughts thou canst imagine; and satisfaction with his likeness the most impossible thing. Let a good understanding and correspondence be continued between God and thee, (which is not possible, if thou disobeyest the dictates of thy Conscience, and takest the liberty to do what thou judgest God hath forbidden thee), that this may be thy rejoicing, *the testimony of a good* 2 Cor. 1. 12. *conscience; that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not according to fleshly wisdom, but the grace of God thou hast had thy conversation*——. Take God for a witness of thy ways and walking; approve thy self to his jealous eye; study to carry thy self acceptably towards him, and unto all well-pleasing. Let that be thy ambition, to stand right in his thoughts, to appear gracious in his eyes. Hold fast thine integrity, that thy heart may not reproach thee as long as thou livest. If iniquity be in thy hand, put it away; then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot and without fear. Be a faithful subject of that Kingdom of God, (and here Conscience rules under

der him), which consists first *in righteousness*, and then *in peace and joy in the Holy Ghost*. Thou wilt, so, daily behold the face of God in righteousness and with pleasure; but wilt most of all please thy self to think of thy final appearance before him, and the Blessedness that shall ensue.

4. *Watch and arm thy self against the too forcible strokes and impressions of sensible objects.* Let not the savor of such low vile things corrupt the palate of thy Soul. A sensual earthly mind and heart cannot taste heavenly delights; *They that are after the flesh do savor the things of the flesh; they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.* Labour to be throughly mortified toward this world and the present state of things. Look upon this Scheme and Pageant as passing away; keep natural appetites under restraint, (the world and the lusts of it pass away together), sensuality is an impure thing. Heavenly refined joy cannot live amidst so much filth. Yea, and if thou give thy flesh liberty too far in things that are (*in specie*) lawful, it will soon get advantage to domineer and keep thy Soul in a depressing servitude. Abridg it then, and cut it short, that thy mind may be enlarged and at liberty, may not be throng'd and pre-possest with carnal imaginations and affections. "Let thy Soul "(if thou wilt take this instruction from a "Heathen) look with a constant erect mind "into the undefiled light, neither darkened "nor horn down towards the Earth; but "stop-

4.

1 Cor. 7. 31.
1 Joh. 2. 17.

Max. Tyr. in dissert. τὸ ὁ θεοὶ κατὰ Πλάτωρος.

"ſtopping its Ears, and turning its Eyes and "all other Senſes back upon it ſelf; and "quite aboliſhing out of it ſelf, all Earthly "Sighs, and Groans, and Pleaſures, and Glo-"ries, and Honours, and Diſgrace; and "having forſaken all theſe, chuſe for the "Guides of its way, true Reaſon and ſtrong "Love, the one whereof will ſhew it the "way, the other make it eaſie and plea-"ſant.

5. 5. *Having voided thy mind of what is earthly and carnal, apply and turn it to this bleſſed Theam.* The moſt excellent and the vileſt objects are alike to thee, while thou mindeſt them not. Thy thoughts poſſibly bring thee in nothing but vexation and trouble, which would bring in aſſoon joy and pleaſure, didſt thou turn them to proper objects. A thought of the heavenly glory is aſſoon thought as of an earthly croſs. We complain the World troubles us; then what do we there? Why get we not up, in our ſpirits, into the quieter Region? What trouble would the thoughts of future glory be to us? How are thoughts and wits ſet on work for this fleſh? But we would have our Souls flouriſh as the Lillies, without any thing of their own care. Yea, we make them toil for torture and not for joy, revolve an affliction a thouſand times before and after it comes, and have never done with it, when eternal Bleſſedneſs gains not a thought.

6. Plead

6. Plead earneſtly with God for his Spirit. This is *joy in the Holy Ghoſt*; or whereof he is the Author. Many Chriſtians (as they muſt be called) are ſuch ſtrangers to this work of imploring and calling in the bleſſed Spirit, as if they were capable of adopting theſe words, *We have not ſo much as heard whether there be an Holy Ghoſt.* That name is with them as an empty ſound. How hardly are we convinc't of our neceſſary dependance on that *free Spirit*, as to all our truly ſpiritual operations? This Spirit is the very earneſt of our inheritance. The foretaſts and firſt fruits we have here of the future Bleſſedneſs, the joy and pleaſure, the complacential reliſhes we have of it before-hand, are by the gracious vouchſafement and work of this bleſſed Spirit. The things *that eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, and which have not entred into the heart of man*, are revealed by this Spirit. Therefore doth the Apoſtle direct his prayer on the behalf of the *Epheſians*, to the Father of this glory, that *he would give them this ſpirit of wiſdom and revelation,---to enlighten the eyes of their underſtanding, that they might know the hope of his calling, and the riches of the glory of his inheritance in* (or *among*) *the Saints.* And its revelation is ſuch as begets an impreſſion; in reſpect whereof 'tis ſaid alſo, *to ſeal up to the day of redemption.* Therefore pray earneſtly for this Spirit; not in idle dreaming words of courſe, but as being really apprehenſive of the neceſſity of prevailing,

6. Eph. 1.

And give not over till thou find that ſacred fire diffuſing it ſelf through thy mind and heart, to enlighten the one and refine the other, and ſo prepoſſeſs *both* of this glory; that thy Soul may be all turned into *joy* and *praiſe*. And then let me add here, (without the formality of a diſtinct head), That it concerns thee to take heed of *quenching that Spirit*, by either *reſiſting* or *neglecting* its holy dictates; or as the ſame precept is otherwiſe given, of *grieving the Spirit*; he is, by Name and Office, the *Comforter*. The Primitive Chriſtians, 'tis ſaid, walked in the fear of God and *in the comfort of the Holy Ghoſt*. Is it equal dealing, to *grieve him* whoſe buſineſs it is to *comfort thee*? Or canſt thou expect *joy* where thou cauſeſt *grief? Walk in the Spirit*; adore its power. Let thy Soul do it homage within thee. Wait for its holy influences, and yeild thy ſelf to its ducture and guidance; ſo wilt thou go as *the redeemed of the Lord*, with *everlaſting joy upon thy head*, till thou enter that preſence, where is fulneſs of joy and pleaſures for evermore.

Nor do thou think it improper or ſtrange, that thou ſhould'ſt be called upon to rejoice in what thou doſt not yet poſſeſs. Thy hope is inſtead of fruition; 'tis an anticipated enjoyment. We are commanded to *rejoice in hope*; and Saints have profeſt to do ſo, to *rejoice even in the hope of the glory of God*. Nor is it unreaſonable that ſhould be thy preſent higheſt joy. For though yet it be a

Rom. 12. 12.

Rom. 5. 2.

diſtant

diſtant thing, and indiſtinctly revealed, the excellency of the object makes compenſation for *both*, with an abundant ſurpluſage. As any one would much more rejoice to be *aſſured* by a great perſon, of ample *poſſeſſions* he would make him his Heir to, (though he knew not diſtinctly what they ſhould be), than to ſee a *ſhilling*, already his own, with his own eyes.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

The addition of two Rules *that more ſpecially reſpect the yet* future *ſeaſon of this Bleſſedneſs*, after this life; *viz.*

Rule 7. *That we patiently wait for it until* death.

Rule 8. *That we love not too much this* preſent life.

THere are yet two more Rules to be ſuperadded, that reſpect the ſeaſon of this Bleſſedneſs, [*when we awake*], *i.e.* not till we go out of time into eternity, not till we paſs out of the drowſie darkneſs of our preſent ſtate, till the night be over with us, and the vigorous light of the everlaſting day do ſhine upon us. Hence therefore it will be further neceſſary:

7 *Rule.* 7. *That while the appointed proper ſeaſon of this Bleſſedneſs is not yet come*, (*i.e.* till God ſhall vouchſafe to tranſlate us from our preſent earthly ſtate), *we compoſe our ſpirits to a patient expectation of it.*

Upon a twofold account, the exerciſe of *patience* is very requiſite in the preſent caſe, *viz.* both in reſpect of this very *expectation* it ſelf, and alſo in reſpect of the *concomitant*

tant miſeries of this expecting ſtate. In the *former* reſpect, an *abſent good* is the matter of our *patience*; in the *latter*, *preſent* and *incumbent evil.* It falls more directly in our way, to ſpeak to the exerciſe of *patience* upon the *former* account; yet as to the *latter*, (though it be more collateral as to our preſent purpoſe), it cannot be unſeaſonable, briefly to conſider that alſo.

First, therefore, *The very expectation it ſelf of this Bleſſedneſs*, renders *patience* very requiſite to our preſent ſtate. *Patience* hath as proper and neceſſary an exerciſe in *expecting the good* we want and deſire, as in *enduring the evil* that is actually upon us. The direction (it muſt be remembred) intends ſuch only as apprehend and deſire this Bleſſedneſs as their greateſt good, whoſe Souls are tranſported with earneſt longings fully to enjoy what they have foretaſted. I am apprehenſive enough, that others need it not. There is no uſe of *patience* in expecting what we deſire not. 1.

But as to thoſe who deſire it moſt, and who therefore are moſt concerned in this advice, it may poſſibly become a doubt, *How, ſince there is ſin in our preſent ignorance of God and unlikeneſs to him, this can be the matter of any patience.*

We muſt therefore know, that as our knowledg of God and conformity to him, are both our *duty* and *bleſſedneſs*, the matter both of our *endeavour* and of Gods *vouchſafement*; ſo our ignorance of him and unlikeneſs to him,

him, are both our *ſin* and our *miſery*; which miſery, though God have graciouſly removed it in part, yet alſo he continues it upon us in part, (as our ſad experience tells us), by his juſt and wiſe diſpenſation, which we cannot except againſt.

Now therefore, looking upon the defect of our knowledg of God and likeneſs to him, under the *former notion*; though we are to reflect upon our ſelves with great diſpleaſure and indignation; yet looking on them in the *latter notion*, we are to ſubmit to the righteous diſpenſation of God with a meek unrepining *patience*.

By this *patience*, therefore, I mean not a ſtupid ſuccumbency under the remaining diſeaſe and diſtemper of our ſpirits, in this our preſent ſtate; a ſenſleſs indifferency and ſolicitant ceſſation from continual endeavours of further redreſs; but a ſilent and ſubmiſſive veneration of Divine Wiſdom, and Juſtice, and Goodneſs, that are ſweetly complicated in this procedure with us, with a quiet peaceful expectation of the bleſſed iſſue of it.

This being premiſed, I ſhall briefly ſhew,

That we have *need* of *patience* } in this pre-
That we have *reaſon* for it } ſent caſe.

1. *That we have need of it*, (ſuppoſing our Souls are *intent upon glory*, that we are in earneſt in this purſuit), will appear upon ſundry accounts.

Firſt,

First, *The greatneſs of the thing we expect. To behold the face of God, to be ſatisfied with his likeneſs.* What ſerious heart, apprehenſive of its own concerns, can without much *patience* hold out under ſuch an expectation? How do Lovers, that expect the marriage-day, tell the hours, and chide the Sun that it makes no more haſt? But how can that Soul contain it ſelf, that expects the moſt intimate fruition of the Lord of glory!

Again, conſider *the continual repreſentation and frequent inculcations of this glory.* Its vigorous powerful beams are, by often repeated pulſations, continually beating upon ſuch Souls as are intent towards it. Life and immortality are brought to light in the Goſpel; and they are obliged by command and inclination to attend its diſcoveries. The eye that's once ſmitten, looks again and again, 'tis not ſatisfied with ſeeing; and every renewed look meets with, ſtill, freſh rayes of glory; they have frequent foretaſts and prelibations, which ſtill give life to new deſires. To lie under the direct ſtroke of the *powers of the world to come*, this requires much *patience*, to ſuſtain the burden of ſuch an expectation. Life it ſelf were otherwiſe a bitter and a wearisom thing. * And the want of ſuch foretaſts (for alas they are not conſtant) makes deſire ſometimes more reſtleſs, and expectation more bitter and grievous.

* Cæterem tibi angelicâ voce thronorum; quàm mirificâ, ſemper in patriâ dulcedine repleamur; niſi vereret, ne ſortè, poſthâc, tantæ dulcedinis hujus comparatione; tota tibi in terris vita non ſolum amariſſima verum etiam amaritudo ipſo penitus videatur. *M. Ficin. Epiſt.*

More-

Moreover, conſider *the Nature and Spring of theſe deſires*, that work in heavenly Souls towards this glory. They are of a Divine Nature and Original; *He that hath wrought us to this ſelf-ſame thing is God*, 2 Cor. 5. 5.

Obſerve the tenour of this Propoſition; God is not the ſubject of predication, but the predicate. The action is not predicated of God, as it would in this form of words, *God hath wrought us*, &c. but God is predicated of this agent, *q.d. this is the work of a Deity*; none but God could be the Author of ſuch deſires. That a Soul ſhould be acted towards glory by the alone power of an Almighty hand! here needs a *Divine Patience* to ſuſtain it, and make it ſtrong and able to endure ſuch a *motion*, where there is *Divine Power* to act and move it forward. The Frame could not hold elſe, it muſt diſſolve. The Apoſtle therefore praying for the *Theſ-*
2 Theſ. 3. 5. *ſalonians*, that *God would direct their hearts into the love of himſelf*, (which could not but enflame their Souls with a deſire of a perfect viſion and enjoyment), preſently adds, *and into the patient waiting for of Chriſt.* Where we cannot by the way but reflect upon the admirable conſtitution and equal temper of the new Creature, as to the *principles* that are ingredient into the compoſition of it, *fervent deſire* allayed with *meek ſubmiſſion*, *mighty love* with *ſtrong patience*. If we conſider it in *actu ſignato*, or in its abſtract *Idea*, this is its temperament; and of theſe there

there is a gradual participation, where ever you find it actually exiſting. God had otherwiſe formed a creature (the prime of his creatures) ſo as by its moſt intrinſecal conſtituent principles to be a torment to it ſelf.

Laſtly, The *tireſome nature of expectation in it ſelf*, is not leaſt conſiderable. It carries ('tis true) pleaſure (if it be *hoping expectation*) with it; but not without a great admixture of pain. It brings a kind of torture to the mind, as a continued exertion or ſtretching forth of the neck (by which it is expreſt) doth to the body. Therefore it is moſt ſignificantly ſaid by the wiſe man, *Hope deferr'd, makes the heart ſick.* All theſe, I ſay, together diſcover the truth of what the Apoſtle tells us, *We have need of patience, that when we, &c. we may inherit the Promiſe.* Rom. 8. 19. Prov. 13. 12. Heb. 10.

2. And as we have need of it, ſo *we have alſo reaſon for it*, upon many accounts. 'Tis no piece of rigorous ſeverity to be put upon the exerciſe of ſome patience, to be kept awhile in a waiting poſture for the completion of this bleſſedneſs. For

Firſt, *The thing you expect is ſure.* You have not to do in this matter with one who is inconſtant, or likely to change. If ſuch a one ſhould make us large promiſes, we ſhould have ſome cauſe, never to think our ſelves ſecure, till we had them made good to us. But ſince we *live in the hope of eternal life, which God who cannot lie*, and who, we *know, is faith-* Tit. 1. 2. Heb. 10. 23

faithful, hath promiſed, we may be confident, and this confidence ſhould quiet our hearts. What a faithful friend keeps for us, we reckon as ſafe in his hands, as in our own. *He that believes makes not haſte.* An impatient haſte argues an unbelieving jealouſie and diſtruſt. *Surely*, there is an end, and thy expectation will not be cut off.

And then, *'tis an happineſs that will recompenſe the moſt wearisome expectation.* 'Twere good ſometimes to conſider with our ſelves, what's the object of our hope? are our expectations pitch't upon a valuable good, that will be worth while to expect? ſo the Pſalmiſt, *What wait I for?* and he anſwers himſelf, *my hope is in thee.* Sure then that hope will not make aſhamed. 'Twere a confounding thing to have been a long time full of great hopes that at laſt dwindle into ſome petite trifle; but when we know beforehand the buſineſs is ſuch as will defray it ſelf, bear its own charges, who would not be contented to wait?

Pſal. 39.7.

Nor will the time of expectation be long, when I ſhall awake, when he ſhall appear. Put it to the longeſt term, 'twas ſaid, Sixteen hundred years ago, to be but a little while; three times over in the ſhutting up of the Bible, he tells us *I come quickly.* He ſeems to foreſee he ſhould be ſomething impatiently expected: And at laſt *Surely I come quickly. q.d.* What will you not believe me? *Be patient ſaith the Apoſtle to the coming of the Lord*; and preſently he adds, *be patient, ſtabliſh your hearts.*

James 5.

hearts for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

Yea, and amidſt the many troubles of that ſhort time of expectation many preſent comforts are intermixt. Heaven is open to us. We have conſtant liberty of acceſs to God. He diſdains not our preſent converſe. We may have the conſtant pleaſure of the exerciſe of grace, the heavenly delights of meditation, the joy of the publick ſolemnities of worſhip, the communion and encouragement of fellow Chriſtians, the light of that countenance whereof we expect the eternal viſion, the comforts of the Holy Ghoſt, the continual proſpect of glory all the way thither. What cauſe have we of impatience or complaint?

Further, *Saints of all ages have had their expecting time.* We are required to be followers of them who through faith and patience have inherited the promiſes. Our Saviour himſelf waited a life's time for his *glorification. I have* (ſaith he) *glorify'd thee on earth; I have finiſhed the work thou gaveſt me to do: And now, Father, glorifie me with thine own ſelf, &c.*

And while we are waiting (if it be not our fault) our glory will be encreaſing. We may be glorifying God in the mean time, which is the end of our beings; we need not live here to no purpoſe.

Again, *We were well enough content, till God more clearly revealed that other ſtate, to live always as we do.* 'Tis not now ingenuous to be impatiently querulous about the time of

our entring into it. 'Tis his free vouchſafement; we never merited ſuch a thing at his hands. 'Tis not commendable among men, to be over quick in exacting debts, even where there was an antecedent right, much leſs where the right only ſhall accrue by promiſe, not yet ſueable; would it not ſhame us to have God ſay to us, *Have patience with me, and I will pay you all?*

And our former ſtate ſhould be often reflected on. If you had promiſed great things to a wretch lately taken off the dunghill, and he is every day impatiently urging you to an untimely accompliſhment, would you not check his over-bold haſte, by minding him of his original? It becomes not baſe and low-born perſons to be tranſported with a prepoſterous over-haſty expectation of high and great things.

Jam. 1. And if God bear with the ſinfulneſs of our preſent ſtate, is it not reaſonable we ſhould bear with the infelicity of it to his appointed time?

Beſides that, we ſhould much injure our ſelves by our impatiency; imbitter our preſent condition, increaſe our own burthen, diſſipate our ſtrength, retard our progreſs towards the perfection we profeſs to aim at; for *patience* muſt have its perfect work, that we may be perfect.

And others, that have had as clear apprehenſions and vigorous deſires (at leaſt) of the future ſtate of glory as we can (with modeſty) pretend to, have yet herein moderated

ted themſelves ſo, as to intend their preſent work with compoſed ſpirits. Take that one inſtance of the bleſſed Apoſtle, *who, whileſt in this earthly tabernacle, he groaned, being burthen'd to be cloth'd with glory, and to have mortality ſwallowed up of life*, being ſenſible enough, that *during his abode or preſence in the body, he was abſent from the Lord*; yet notwithſtanding the fervor and vehemency of theſe longings, with the greateſt calmneſs and reſignation imaginable, (as to the termination or continuance of his preſent ſtate), he adds, that (*though he had rather be abſent from the body, to be preſent with the Lord*) 2 Cor. 5. 9. *it was yet his chief ambition* (as the word he φιλοτιμέμεθα. uſes ſignifies) *whether preſent or abſent* (as it in compariſon of that, to be preſent or abſent were indifferent, though otherwiſe out of that compariſon, he had told us, he would be abſent rather) to be *accepted*, to appear εὐάρεστοι. grateful and well-pleaſing in the eye of God; ſuch that he might delight and take content in, (as his expreſſion imports). As if he had ſaid, though I am not unapprehenſive of the ſtate of my caſe, I know well, I am kept out of a far more deſirable condition, while I remain in this tabernacle; yet, may I but pleaſe and appear acceptable in the ſight of God, whether I be ſooner diſmiſt from this thraldom, or longer continued in it, I contend not. His burden here, that ſo ſenſibly preſt him, was not a *preſent evil* ſo much as an *abſent good*. He was not ſo burden'd by *what he felt* and *could not remove*, as by

what he ſaw and *could not enjoy.* His groans accordingly were not *brutal*, as thoſe of a beaſt under a too heavy load; but *rational*, the groans of an apprehenſive ſpirit panting after an alluring inviting glory, which he had got the proſpect of, but could not yet attain. And hence the ſame ſpiritual reaſon which did *exerciſe*, did alſo, at once, *moderate* his deſires; ſo that, as he ſaw there was reaſon to deſire, ſo he ſaw there was reaſon his deſires ſhould be allay'd by a ſubmiſſive ingenuous patience, till they might have a due and ſeaſonable accompliſhment. And that ſame temper of mind we find in him, when he profeſſes to be in *a ſtrait between two, having a deſire to be diſſolved and to be with Chriſt*, which he thought to be far better, and yet apprehended his longer abode in the world to be needful for the ſervice of the Church; whereupon he expreſſes his confidence, *that he ſhould abide longer*, and therein diſcovers how well contented he was, it ſhould be ſo.

Phil. 1. 23.

Therefore, as in reference to *this very expectation it ſelf*, there is great need of *patience*; ſo the *exerciſe* of it in this caſe hath nothing harſh or unreaſonable in it, or which the ſpirit of a Saint may not well comport with.

2. And for the *exerciſe* of *Patience* upon the *latter account*; the *concomitant miſeries of this our preſent expecting ſtate:* I need not inſiſt to ſhew how needful it is, this being that which our own ſenſe will ſufficiently inſtruct

us

us in. We are not to expect the future ſtate of Bleſſedneſs in a ſtate of preſent eaſe and reſt, in a quiet friendly world, in a calm and peaceful region, under placid and benign influences from men and times; but amidſt ſtorms and tempeſts and troubles on every ſide, under frowns and diſpleaſures, threats and dangers, harſh and rough ſeverities, ill and ungentle uſages, flouts and ſcorns, wrongs and injurious dealings, wants and preſſures in many kinds. When the *world is once forſaken* by us, it grows angry; if we diſclaim it, and avow our ſelves not to be of it, become confeſſed ſtrangers and pilgrims in it, ſet our ſelves ſeriouſly and viſibly to mind and deſign ſomething above and beyond it, diſcover our ſelves to be of them that are *called out of it*, from the ſame principle that it *loves its own*, it will *hate us*; when once *God calls us his ſons*, the *world will not know us*. We ſee in this context we are diſcourſing from, what the Pſalmiſts condition was, whilſt as yet he remained under this bleſſed expectation; he found *the men of time*, whoſe *portion was in this life*, to be deadly enemies, wicked oppreſſors, proud inſulters; they were to him as greedy lions, as a blood-thirſty ſword. His cries to be delivered from them, ſhew what he *met* with at their hands, or thought he had reaſon to *fear*. Nor can ſo raging enmity and hate ever ceaſe to meditate miſchiefs and cruelties. The ſame principle ſtill remains in all the Serpents brood, and will ſtill be putting

1 Joh. 3. 1

forth it ſelf in ſutable practices, which cannot but infer to the contrary *Seed* continual trouble and matter of complaint.

And (in ſhort) whatever is here the matter of your complaint, ought to be the matter of your patience. Whence it cannot be doubted the matter of it will be very copious; ſo as to require the [*all*] of patience (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) which his addreſſing this ſolemn requeſt to God on the behalf of theſe *Coloſſian* Chriſtians plainly intimates. He prays that *they*
Col. 1. 11. *may be ſtrengthened with all might according to the glorious power of God unto* [*all*] *patience*, &c. Patience is the Chriſtians *ſuffering power*, 'tis *Paſſive fortitude*, an *ability to ſuffer*; and ſo apprehenſive he is of their great need of a full, and ample ſupply of this *power*; that he prays that they might be ſtrengthened in this kind with *might*, with *all might*, that they might be even *almighty ſufferers*; ſtrengthened with a might *according* and correſponding *to the glorious power of God himſelf*; Such as might appear the proper impreſs and image of *Divine power*, whereof the divine power might be both the *principle*, and the *patern* (for the patience whereby God bears the wrongs done to him is called power too; *Let the power of the Lord be great as thou haſt ſpoken ſaying, the Lord is long-ſuffering forgiving, &c.*) And this [unto *all patience*] where *patience* is put for an *act of this power*, or muſt be underſtood of patience in exerciſe, *actual bearing*.

Nor are we to look upon the expreſſions of

of this prayer as ſo many hyperbolical ſtrains, or Rhetorical ſchemes of Speech. He prays according to the apprehenſion he had of the neceſſity of ſuffering Chriſtians.

And yet how much ſoever the *need* is, the *reaſon* is not leſs, 'Tis a thing as *poſſible* as it is *neceſſary*; yea there is more in the power *of the cauſe*, than to work this ſingle *effect*. I mean it not only of the efficient cauſe mentioned before, but of the objective, or final (as having ſuch a ſuperabundant ſufficiency in its kind alſo) hinted in the cloſe of the following verſe. He doth not utter vain and groundleſs wiſhes, when he prays, that to that *all of patience they might* add *joyfulneſs* too, and *giving of thanks*; no the matter (as if he had ſaid) will bear it, even the inheritance of the Saints in light (the very expectation *objective*, I am ſpeaking of) It hath enough in it to induce, not only *patience*, but *joy*, not a contented *bearing* only, but *giving of thanks* too, *to him that hath made you meet for that inheritance*. Ver. 12.

True it is indeed, that the very need we have of patience, and the gain that would accrue by it, is it ſelf a reaſon, why we ſhould labour to frame our ſpirits to it, for if ſuch evils muſt be undergone, how much better is it to bear *them alone*, than to have the diſeaſe of a wounded impatient ſpirit, to bear alſo, as an additional burden. *The law of patience*, is, certainly, a moſt indulgent merciful Law, a gracious proviſion (as much as can be made by a Law) for the quiet and

eaſe of our ſpirits, under the ſharpeſt and moſt afflictive ſufferings. As might at large be ſhewn, were it ſutable to fall into a diſcourſe of *Patience* in it ſelf conſidered; and to treat of that reſt and pleaſure, that liberty of ſpirit, that poſſeſſion and dominion of ones own Soul, which it carries in it: But that were too much a digreſſion. It only falls directly here in our way to conſider, That as we have many grievances and preſſures to undergo, while we are expecting the future Bleſſedneſs, which render the exerciſe of *patience* very requiſite, ſo that there is enough of weight and worth in *that very expectation*, (*i.e.* in what we expect) to outweigh them all, and to render the exerciſe thereof highly reaſonable upon that account.

Rom. 8. 18. *I reckon* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *that the ſufferings of this preſent time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that ſhall be revealed in us.* Thus (ſaith he) *I reckon*, *i.e.* it is my ſtated ſettled judgment, not a ſudden raſh thought. When I have reaſon'd the matter with my ſelf, weigh'd it well, conſider'd the caſe, turn'd it round, view'd it exactly on every ſide, ballanc'd advantages and diſadvantages, ponder'd all things which are fit to come into conſideration about it, *this is the reſult*, the final determination, that which I conclude and judg at laſt, (judgment is the laſt product and iſſue of the moſt exquiſite enquiry and debate, the ultimate and moſt perfect act of reaſon), *That the ſufferings of this now of time are of no value*; things

not

not fit, as it were, to be mentioned the ſame day with *the glory to be revealed*, &c. It can therefore be no *hard Law*, no unreaſonable impoſition, that ſhall oblige us to the exerciſe of *patience*, under ſuch ſufferings, *in the expectation of ſo tranſcendent glory*. For, conſider,

Firſt, Theſe ſufferings are but from men, (for the ſufferings of which the Apoſtle here ſpeaks, are ſuch as wherein we ſuffer together with Chriſt, *i.e.* for his Name and Intereſt, on behalf of the Chriſtian cauſe): But this glory is from God. How diſproportionable muſt the effects be of a created and increated cauſe.

Again, Theſe ſufferings reach no further than the bone and fleſh, (*Fear not them that kill the body, and after they have done that, can do no more*, &c.): But this glory reaches unto and transforms the Soul. How little can a clod of earth ſuffer, in compariſon of what an immortal ſpirit may enjoy?

And further, There is much mixture in our preſent ſufferings; the preſent ſtate of ſuffering *Saints* is not a ſtate of *total miſery*; there are, as it were, Rayes of Glory *inter-lac't* with their preſent afflictions: But there will be nothing of Affliction mingled with their future Glory.

Yea, and (what may not only convince, but even tranſport us too), Theſe ſufferings are but *temporary*, (nay, but *momentary*), This glory *eternal*. What heart is big enough to comprehend the full ſenſe of theſe words, 2 Cor. 4. 17.

Our

2 Cor. 4. 17. *Our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* How might I dwell here upon every ſyllable, *light affliction*, weighty glory, [exceeding weight], affliction for a moment, eternal weight of glory!

O then, How unworthy is it of the Chriſtian name and hopes, that we ſhould have an impatient reſentment of this Method God follows with us, (as he did with our great Redeemer and Lord), that we ſhould ſuffer firſt, and then enter into glory! Heaven were a poor Heaven, if it would not make us ſavers. It were high time for us to give over the Chriſtian profeſſion, if we do not really account, that its reward and hope do ſurmount its reproach and trouble; or do think its Croſs more weighty than its Crown. Is the price and worth of eternal glory fall'n? It hath been counted worth ſuffering for. There have been thoſe in the world, that would not accept deliverance from theſe ſufferings, *that they might obtain the better reſurrection.* Are we grown wiſer? Or would we indeed wiſh God ſhould turn the Tables, and aſſign us our good things here, and hereafter evil things? Ungrateful Souls! How ſevere ſhould we be to our ſelves? That we ſhould be ſo apt to *complain* for what we ſhould *admire* and give thanks! What, becauſe purer and more refined Chriſtianity in our time and in this part of the world hath had publick favour and countenance, can we therefore not tell how to frame our minds

to

to the thoughts of ſuffering? Are *Tribulation* and *Patience* antiquated names, quite out of date and uſe with us, and more ungrateful to our ears and hearts, than heaven and eternal glory are acceptable? And had we rather (if we were in danger of ſuffering on the Chriſtian account) run a hazard as to the *latter*, than adventure on the *former*? Or do we think it impoſſible we ſhould ever come to the trial, or be concern'd to buſie our ſelves with ſuch thoughts? Is the world become ſo ſtable and ſo unacquainted with viciſſitudes, that a ſtate of things leſs favourable to our profeſſion can never revolve upon us? It were, however, not unuſeful to put ſuch a caſe by way of ſuppoſition to our ſelves. For every ſincere Chriſtian is in affection and preparation of his mind a Martyr. He that loves not Chriſt better than his *own life*, cannot be his Diſciple. We ſhould at leaſt inure our thoughts more to a ſuffering ſtate, that we may thence take ſome occaſion to reflect and judg of the temper of our hearts towards the Name and Cauſe of Chriſt. 'Tis eaſie ſuffering indeed, in *Idea* and *contemplation*; but ſomething may be collected from the *obſervation*, how we can reliſh and comport with ſuch thoughts. 'Tis as *training* in order to *fight*; which is done, often, upon a very remote ſuppoſition, that ſuch occaſions may poſſibly fall out.

Therefore, What now do we think of it, if our way into the Kingdom of God ſhall be through many tribulations? If, before we be-

behold the ſmiles of *his* bleſſed face, we muſt be entertained with the leſs pleaſing ſight of the frowning aſpect and viſage of an angry world? If we firſt bear the image of a crucified Chriſt, e're we partake of the likeneſs of a glorious God? What, do we regret the thoughts of it? Do we account we ſhall be ill dealt with, and have an hard bargain of it? O how tender are we grown, in compariſon of the hardineſs and magnanimity of Primitive Chriſtians? we have not the *patience* to *think* of what they had the *patience* to *endure*. We ſhould not yet forget our ſelves, that ſuch a thing belongs to our profeſſion, even in this way to teſtifie our fidelity to Chriſt, and our value of the inheritance purchaſed by his blood, if he call us thereunto. We muſt know it is a thing inſerted into the Religion of Chriſtians, and (with reſpect to their condition in this world) made an eſſential thereto. He cannot be a Chriſtian, that doth not *deny himſelf and take up the Croſs*. How often, when the active part of a Chriſtians duty is ſpoken of, is the paſſive part ſtudiouſly and expreſly annexed? *Let us run* [with patience] *the race that is ſet before us.* The good ground *brought forth fruit* [with patience], *eternal life is for them that by* [a patient] *continuance in well-doing ſeek after it.* Yea, and hence the Word of Chriſt is called *the Word of his* [patience]. And the ſtile wherein the beloved Diſciple ſpeaks of himſelf, and his profeſſion is this, *I John, a companion in tribulation and in the*

Heb. 12. 1.
Mat. 17.
Rom. 2.
Rev. 3.
Chap. 1.

King

Kingdom and [patience] *of Jeſus Chriſt.* Do we mean to plead preſcription againſt all this? Or have we got an expreſs exemption? Have we a diſcharge to ſhew, a manumiſſion from all the ſuffering part of a Chriſtians duty? and is it not a diſcharge alſo from being Chriſtians as much? Will we diſavow our ſelves to belong to that noble Society of them that through Faith and Patience inherit the Promiſes? Surely we are highly conceited of our ſelves, if we think we are too good to be numbred among them of whom the *world was not worthy.* Or we deſign to our ſelves a long abode here, while we ſo much value the worlds favour and a freedom from worldly trouble: Or eternity is with us an empty ſound, and the future Bleſſedneſs of Saints an aiery thing, that we ſhould reckon it inſufficient to counterpoiſe the ſufferings of a few haſty days that will ſo ſoon have an end. 'Tis a ſad Symptom of the declining ſtate of Religion, when the powers of the world to come are ſo over-maſtered by the powers of this preſent world; and objects of Senſe ſo much out-weigh thoſe of Faith. And is not this apparently the caſe with the Chriſtians of the preſent age? Do not your thoughts run the ſame courſe with theirs, that meditated nothing but ſitting on the right and left hand of Chriſt, in an earthly dominion, while they never dream't of drinking of his Cup, or being baptized with his Baptiſm? How many vain dreamers have we of golden mountains and (I know not what) earthly

ly felicity; whoſe pretended Propheſies about a (ſuppoſed) near approaching proſperity to the Church on earth, gain eaſier belief, or are more ſavory and taking with too many, than all that the Sacred Oracles diſcover about its glorious ſtate in heaven? Hence are our ſhoulders ſo unfitted to Chriſts yoke (like the unaccuſtomed Heifer), and the buſineſs of ſuffering will not enter into our hearts. Methinks the belief and expectation of ſuch a ſtate hereafter, ſhould make us even regardleſs of what we ſee or ſuffer here; and render the good or evil things of time as indifferent to us. Yet neither plead I for an abſolute Stoical *Apathy*, but for *Patience*. A great follower of that Sect acknowledges, "It is not a vertue to *bear* what we *feel* not, "or have no ſenſe of. Stupidity under Pro- "vidence is not a Chriſtian temper; as that Moraliſt ſays of the wiſe man, "'Tis not "the hardneſs of ſtone or iron that is to be "aſcribed to him.

Sen. de Conſtant. ſapientis.

But leſt any ſhould run into that more dangerous miſtake, to think, that by the *patience* we have been all this while perſwading to (in the expectation of the bleſſedneſs yet to come) is meant a *love of this preſent world*, and a complacential adherence of heart to the earth, (which extream the terrene temper of many Souls may much encline them to). It will be neceſſary upon that account to add (in reference alſo to the yet future expected ſeaſon of this bleſſedneſs

ſedneſs) this further and concluding inſtruction, *viz.*

That (however we are not to repine at our being held ſo long in this world in an expecting ſtate, yet) *we let not our Souls cleave too cloſe to their terreſtrial ſtations, nor be too much in love with the body, and this preſent low ſtate of life on earth.* 8 *Rule.*

For evident it is, that notwithſtanding all the miſeries of this expecting ſtate, the moſt are yet loath to leave the world, and have hearts ſordidly hankering after preſent things. And ſurely there is much difference between being *patient* of an abode on earth and being *fond* of it. Therefore ſince the true bleſſedneſs of Saints conſiſts in ſuch things as we have ſhewn, and cannot be enjoy'd *till we awake*, not within the compaſs of time and this lower world, It will be very requiſite to inſiſt here a while in the proſecution of this laſt Rule. And what I ſhall ſay to it, ſhall be by way of

{ *Caution.*
{ *Inforcement.*

1. For *Caution*: That we miſapprehend not that temper and diſpoſition of Spirit, we are in this thing to endeavour and aim at. And it eſpecially concerns us to be cautious about the 1.

{ *Inducements,*
{ *Degree,*

of

of that desire of leaving this world, or contempt of this present life, which we either aspire to, or allow our selves in.

First, *Inducements.* Some are desirous, others at least content, to quit the world upon very insufficient, or indeed wicked considerations.

1. There are, who desire it meerly to be out of the way of present troubles, whereof they have either too impatient a sense, or an unworthy and impotent fear.

Many times the urgency and anguish of *incumbent* trouble impresses such a sense, and utters it self in such language as that, *Now,* Jonah 4. 3. *O Lord, take I beseech thee my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.* Or Job 7. 15. that, *My Soul chuseth strangling and death rather than life:* Makes men *long for death, and dig for it as for hid treasure; rejoice and be exceeding glad when they can find the grave.*

Yea, and the very fear of troubles that are but *impendent* and threatning, make some wish the Grave a Sanctuary, and render the Clods of the Valley sweet unto their thoughts. They lay possibly so humorsom and fanciful stress upon the meer circumstances of dying, that they are earnest *to dye out of hand,* to avoid *dying so and so*; as the Poet would fain perswade himself it was not *Death* he feared, but *Shipwrack.* It would not trouble them to *dye,* but *to dye by a violent hand,* or to be made a publick spectacle; they cannot endure the thoughts of *dying so.* Here is nothing commendable or worthy of a Christian in all this.

Demitt naufragium mors mihi nunc erit. Ovid.

It

It were a piece of Chriſtian bravery to dare to live in ſuch a caſe, even when there is a viſible likelihood of dying a ſacrifice in the midſt of flames. How much this glory was affected in the earlier days of Chriſtianity is ſufficiently known: Though, I confeſs, there were exceſſes in that kind, altogether unimitable. But if God *call* a man forth to be his Champion and Witneſs, to lay down a life, in it ſelf little deſirable, in a truly worthy cauſe, The *call* of his Providence, ſhould be as the ſound of the trumpet to a truly martial Spirit; it ſhould fill his Soul with a joyful courage and ſenſe of honour, and be comply'd with cheerfully, with that apprehenſion and reſentment a ſtout Soldier would have of his Generals putting him upon ſome very hazardous piece of ſervice, *viz.* he would ſay, "*My General hath not* (as the "Moraliſt expreſſes his ſenſe for him) *de-*"*ſerved ill of me, but it appears he judged well.* It ſhould *be counted all joy to* [*fall into*] *ſuch trials*; that is, when they become our lot by a providential diſpoſition, not by a raſh precipitation of our ſelves. And as it is a *wickedneſs inconſiſtent with Chriſtianity*, to be of that habitual temper, to *chuſe to deſert ſuch a cauſe for the ſaving of life*; ſo it is a *weakneſs very reproachful to it*, to lay down ones life in ſuch a caſe with regret, as unwilling *in this kind* to glorifie him who laid down *his* for us. *We are no more to die to our ſelves, than to live to our ſelves.* Our Lord Jeſus hath purchaſed to himſelf a Dominion over

Imperator de me non malè meruit ſed benè judicavit, Sen.

Jam. 1. 2.

both ſtates, of the *living* and *dead*, and whe-
Rom. 14. 8. ther *we live we muſt live to him, or die we muſt die to him.* 'Tis the glory of a Chriſtian to live ſo much above the world, that nothing in it may make him either *fond* of life, or *weary* of it.

2. There are others who are (at leaſt) indifferent and careleſs how ſoon they die, out of either a worſe than paganiſh infidelity, disbelieving the concernments of another world; or a brutiſh ſtupidity, not apprehending them; or a groſs conceited ignorance, miſunderſtanding the terms of the Goſpel, and thinking themſelves to be in a good condition, as to eternity, when the caſe is much otherwiſe with them.

Take heed thy willingneſs to die be from no ſuch inducements; but a meer deſire of being with God, and of attaining this perfection and bleſſedneſs, which he hath engaged thee in the purſuit and expectation of. And then, having made ſure it be right as to the *riſe* and *principle*, be careful *it be not undue in point of Degree, i.e.* a cold intermittent vellcity is too little on the one hand, and a peremptory precipitant haſtineſs is too much on the other. The middle and deſirable temper here is a *complacential ſubmiſſion to the Divine will in that affair*, with a *preponderating inclination on our part, towards our eternal home, if the Lord ſee good.* For we have two things to attend in this buſineſs, and by which our ſpirits may be ſway'd this way or that, *i.e. the goodneſs of the ob-*

object to be choſen, and the *will of God which muſt guide and over-rule our choice*; the former whereof we are permitted to eye in ſubordination to the latter, and not otherwiſe.

Now our apprehenſion of the deſirableneſs and intrinſick goodneſs of the object ought to be ſuch, (we are Infidels elſe, if we have not that account of it), that nothing we can eye under the notion of *a good to us*, may be reckon'd ſo eligible as that, viz. *our final and compleat Bleſſedneſs in the other world*; which becauſe we know we cannot enjoy without dying, Death alſo muſt be judged more eligible than Life, that is, Our Bleſſedneſs muſt be judged *eligible for it ſelf*, and *Death as requiſite* to make it *preſent*. So that the entire object we are diſcourſing of being *preſent Bleſſedneſs*, conſider it in compariſon with any thing elſe, that can be lookt upon by us as a *good which we our ſelves are to enjoy*, it ought to be preferr'd and choſen out of hand, in as much as nothing can be ſo great a *preſent good to us*, as that. And this ought to be the proper habitual inclination of our ſpirits, their conſtant frame and bent, as they reſpect only *our own intereſt and welfare*.

But conſidering Gods Dominion over us, and intereſt in our Lives and Beings, and that as well ingenuity as neceſſity binds us to be ſubject to *his pleaſure*, We ſhould herein patiently ſuffer our ſelves to be over-ruled thereby, and not ſo abſtractly mind our

own intereſt and contentment in this matter, as if we were altogether our own, and had no Lord over us. *Plato*, who abounds in diſcourſes of the deſirableneſs of dying, and of the bleſſed change it makes with them that are good, yet hath this apt expreſſion of the ſubjection we ought to be in to the Divine pleaſure as to this matter, "That the "Soul is in the Body as Soldiers in a Garri- "ſon, from whence they may not withdraw "themſelves without his order and directi- "on who placed them there: And expoſtu- lates thus, "If (ſaith he) a Slave of yours "ſhould deſtroy his own Life without your "conſent, would you not be diſpleaſed; and "if there had been any place left for revenge, "been apt enough to that too? So he brings in *Socrates* diſcourſing; and diſcovers himſelf herein to have had more Light in this matter, touching that ſubordinate intereſt only men have in their own lives and the unlawfulneſs of ſelf-murther, (as he had in other things too), than moſt Heathens of the more refined Sect ever arrived to.

In Phæd. Vid. & Plotin. περὶ ἐξαγωγῆς. Ennead. 1.

If therefore God would give us leave to die, we ſhould *upon our own account* be much more enclin'd to chuſe it; but, while he thinks fit to have it deferr'd, ſhould yeild to his will with an unrepining ſubmiſſion. Only it ought not to reſt at all *on our part*, or that *as to our ſelves* we find any thing more grateful to us in this world, that we are willing to ſtay a day longer in it. That *for our own ſakes* we ſhould affect a continuance here, would

would argue a terrene ſordid ſpirit. But then ſuch ſhould be our dutiful filial Love to the Father of our ſpirits, that in pure devotedneſs to his intereſts, we would be content to dwell (if he would have it ſo) a *Methuſelah*'s age in an earthly tabernacle for his ſervice; that is, that we may help to preſerve his memorial in a lapſed world, (overrun with Atheiſm and ignorance of its Maker), and win him hearts and love (to our uttermoſt) among his apoſtate diſloyal creatures; and in our capacities be helpful to the encouragement of ſuch as he continues in the world for the ſame purpoſes. This is the very temper the Apoſtle expreſſes when in that ſtrait. Which way the poiſe of his own ſpirit enclin'd him, in the conſideration of his own intereſt, and what was *ſimply more eligible to him*, he expreſſes with high Emphaſis; *to be with Chriſt*, ſaith he, *is more, more deſirable to me*, (for there are two comparatives in the Greek Text), and therefore he profeſſes his *own deſire* in order thereto, to be *diſſolved*; but that *private deſire* was not ſo *peremptory* and *abſolute*, but he could make it yeild and give place to his duty towards God and his Church, as it follows. So we know 'tis poſſible, that reſpects to a friend may over-ſway a mans own particular inclination; and the inclination remain notwithſtanding, but is ſubdued only; otherwiſe, had any reaſon or argument that did reſpect *my ſelf* perſwaded me to change it, I ſhould then follow but my own proper inclination ſtill,

Phil. 1. 23.

ſtill, and ſo my friend hath nothing to thank me for.

So it ought to be with us here. Our *inclination* ſhould preponderate towards a preſent change of our ſtate; only our devotedneſs to *his* intereſt and pleaſure, *whoſe* we are, ſhould eaſily over-rule it. This is the lovely temper of a gracious ſpirit, as to this thing, that *to die might be our choice*, and *to live in the mean time ſubmitted to as our duty.*

As an ingenuous Son whom his Father hath employ'd abroad in a foreign Country, though duty did bind him cheerfully therein to comply with his Fathers will and the neceſſity of his affairs; yet, when his Father ſhall ſignifie to him, that now he underſtands no neceſſity of his longer continuance there, and therefore he may if he pleaſe return, but he ſhall have leave to follow his own inclination, 'Tis not hard to conjecture, that the deſire of ſeeing a Fathers face would ſoon determine the choice of ſuch a Son that way.

But how remote are the generality of them that profeſs themſelves Gods Children from that pious ingenuity. We have taken root in the earth and forgotten our heavenly originals and alliances. We are as *inhabitants* here, not *pilgrims*; hardly perſwaded to entertain with any patience the thoughts of leaving our places on earth; which yet, do we what we can, ſhall ſhortly know us no more.

In

In ſhort then: That vile temper of ſpirit, againſt which I profeſſedly bend my ſelf in the following diſcourſe, is, when men, not out of any ſenſe of duty towards God, or ſolicitude for their own Souls, but a meer ſordid love to the body and affixedneſs of heart to the Earth and terrene things, cannot endure the thoughts of dying. And that which I perſwade to is, That having the true proſpect of the future Bleſſedneſs before our eyes, and our hearts poſſeſt with the comfortable hope of attaining to it, we ſhake off our earthly inclinations, and expect with deſire and joy the time of our diſmiſſion hence, that we may enjoy it; which is the deſign of what was promiſed in the next place, *viz.*

2. *The Inforcement of this Inſtruction.* Suffer we therefore our ſelves to be reaſon'd with about this matter; and let us conſider whether we can in good earneſt think ſuch an averſation, as we diſcover, to our bleſſed tranſlation hence, an excuſable, a tolerable temper; or whether it be not highly reaſonable, that we ſhould entertain the thoughts, at leaſt, with more content and patience (if not with more fervent deſire) of our departure hence and introduction into that other ſtate. 2.

Let me demand of thee, Doſt thou thus regret the thoughts of death, as being unwilling to die at all, or as being unwilling to die as yet? Is it the thing it ſelf, or only the circumſtance of time that thou excepteſt

againſt? 'Tis likely thou wilt ſay that which will ſeem more plauſible, and ſo fix only on the latter; and that thou wilt not profeſs to deſire an *eternity* on earth, but only *more time*. Well, let that for the preſent be ſuppoſed, as it is a more *modeſt*, ſo to be a *true* account of thy deſires: Yet what is the reaſon of this moderation with thee herein; and that thou ſo limiteſt thy ſelf? Is it that thou believeſt the Bleſſedneſs of the other ſtate will prove better than any thing thou canſt enjoy here; and that thou art not willing eternally to be deprived of? But doſt thou not think it is *now* better alſo? And what canſt thou pretend, why what is *now* the beſt and moſt deſirable good, ſhould not be *now* choſen and deſired out of hand? Or is it, that thou thinkeſt it unbecomes thee to croſs the ſupreme will of him that made thee, who hath determined, *that all men once ſhall die?* And then, how knoweſt thou but he hath alſo determined concerning thee, that thou ſhalt die the next day or hour? and 'tis only a *preſent willingneſs to die, in ſubordination to the Divine Will*, or *upon ſuppoſition of it*, thou art perſwaded to. Why, art thou not affraid, leſt *thy preſent unwillingneſs* ſhould croſs *his preſent will?* Doſt thou not think that Soveraign power is as ſufficient to determine of the circumſtance, as the thing it ſelf? And art thou not aſhamed to pretend an agreement with God about the *thing it ſelf*, and yet differ with him about a *circumſtance?*

tumſtance? Shall that be a ground of quarrel between him and thee?

But while thou only profeſſeſt that more modeſt deſire of *more time* in the world, what ſecurity can'ſt thou give, that when that deſire hath been liberally gratified, it ſhall at length be laid down, and tumultuate no more? What bounds wilt thou fix to it, which thou dareſt undertake it ſhall not paſs? Art thou ſure, when thou ſhalt have lain at the Worlds Breaſt ten or twenty years longer, thou wilt then imagine thy ſelf to have drawn it dry; or that then thou ſhalt begin to nauſeate the World and wiſh for Heaven? Or haſt thou not reaſon from thy former experience to ſuſpect, that the longer thou dwelleſt on Earth, the more terrene thou wilt grow; and that if thou be indiſpoſed to leave it this day or year, thou wilt be more ſo the next; and ſo thy deſire become boundleſs and infinite, which is to deſire to be here always, the thing which thou ſeem'dſt ſo unwilling to own.

And if that prove at laſt, the true ſtate of thy caſe, Art thou then a Chriſtian or art thou a Man, that thou harboureſt in thy breaſt ſo irreligious and irrational, yea, ſo ſordid a wiſh?

What, wiſh eternally to be affixt to a Clod of Earth? Is that at length become thy God? Or wilt thou ſay, he is thy God whom thou never deſireſt to enjoy? Or that thou haſt already enough of him, but not of the world, and yet that he is thy God? Or woul'ſt thou

over-

over-turn the Laws of Nature, and ſubvert the moſt Sacred Divine Conſtitutions, abortive the deſigns of Eternal Wiſdom and Love, evacuate and nullifie the great Atchievements of thy merciful and mighty Redeemer, only to gratifie a Senſual Brutiſh Humour?

But evident it is, thou doſt only in vain diſquiet thy ſelf, thou canſt not diſturb the ſetled order of things. Eternal Laws are not repealable by a fond wiſh. Thou ſet'ſt that dreadful thing *Death* at nothing the further diſtance, by thine abhorrency of it. It will overtake thee whether thou wilt or no; and methinks thine own reaſon ſhould inſtruct thee to attemper and form thy ſelf to what thou canſt not avoid, and poſſeſs thee with ſuch thoughts and deſires as thoſe of that diſcreet Pagan, "Lead me, O God, (ſaith "he) whither thou wilt, and I will follow "thee willingly; but if I be rebellious and "refuſe, I ſhall follow thee notwithſtanding. What we cannot decline, 'tis better to bear willingly, than with a regret, that ſhall be both *vain* and *afflictive*.

Epictet.

And what haſt thou hitherto met with in the world, that ſhould ſo highly endear it to thee? Examine and ſearch more narrowly into thy earthly comforts; what is there in them to make them ſelf-deſirable, or to be ſo for their *own ſakes*? What is it to have thy fleſh indulged and pleaſed? to have thy ſenſe gratified? thy phanſie tickled? What ſo great good, worthy of an immortal reaſonable

ſonable ſpirit, canſt thou find in Meats and Drinks, in full Barns and Coffers, in vulgar Fame and Applauſe, that ſhould render theſe things deſirable for themſelves?

And if there were any real felicity in theſe things *for the preſent*, whil'ſt thou art permitted to enjoy them, yet doſt thou not know, that what thou enjoyeſt to day thou may'ſt loſe to morrow, and that ſuch other unthought of evils may befall thee, as may infuſe a bitterneſs into all thou enjoyeſt, which cauſes immediately the *enjoyment* to ceaſe, while the *things themſelves* remain, and will be equal to a total loſs of all?

And thus (as the Moraliſt ingeniouſly ſpeaks) "thou wilt continually need ano- "ther happineſs to defend the former, and "new wiſhes muſt ſtill be made on the be- "half of thoſe which have already ſucceed- "ed. Sen. de brev. vit.

But canſt thou indeed think it worth the while, that the Maker of the Univerſe ſhould create a Soul and ſend it down into the world on purpoſe to ſuperintend theſe trivial affairs, to keep alive a ſilly piece of well-figured earth while it eats and drinks, to move it to and fro in chaſe of ſhadows, to hold it up while others bow the knee and do it homage, if it had not ſome higher work to mind in reference to another ſtate? Art thou contented to live long in the world to ſuch purpoſes? What low worthleſs ſpirit is this, that had rather be ſo employ'd than in the viſions of his Makers face; that chuſes thus

thus to entertain it ſelf *on earth*, rather than partake the effuſions of Divine Glory *above*; *that had rather creep with Worms than ſoar with Angels*; *aſſociate with Brutes than with the Spirits of juſt men made perfect?* Who can ſolve the *Phænomenon*, or give a rational account why there ſhould be ſuch a Creature as man upon the Earth, abſtracting from the hopes of another world? Who can think it the effect of an infinite wiſdom; or account it a more worthy deſign, than the repreſenting of ſuch a Scene of actions and affairs by Puppets on a Stage? For my part, upon the ſtricteſt enquiry, I ſee nothing *in the life of man upon earth*, that ſhould render it, *for it ſelf*, more the matter of a rational election (ſuppoſing the free option given him in the firſt moment of his being) than preſently again to ceaſe to be the next moment.

Yea, and is there not enough obvious in every mans experience, to incline him rather to the contrary choice; and ſuppoſing a future Bleſſedneſs in another world, to make him paſſionately deſirous (with ſubmiſſion to the Divine pleaſure) of a ſpeedy diſmiſſion into it? Do not the burdens that preſs us *in this earthly tabernacle* teach our very ſenſe and urge oppreſt natures into involuntary groans, while as yet our *conſideration* doth not intervene? And if we do *conſider*, Is not every *thought* a *ſting*, making a much deeper impreſſion than what only toucheth our fleſh and bones? Who can reflect upon

upon his preſent ſtate and not preſently be in pangs? The troubles that follow *humanity* are many and great, thoſe that follow *Chriſtianity* more numerous and grievous. The ſickneſs, pains, loſſes, diſappointments, and whatſoever afflictions that are in the Apoſtles language, *humane*, or *common to men*, (as are all the external ſufferings of Chriſtians, in *nature* and *kind*, though they are liable to them upon an account peculiar to themſelves, which there the Apoſtle intimates), are none of our greateſt evils; yet even upon the account of them, have we any reaſon to be ſo much in love with ſo unkind a world? Is it not ſtrange, our very *Bridewell* ſhould be ſuch a *Heaven* to us? But theſe things are little conſiderable in compariſon of the more ſpiritual grievances of Chriſtians, as ſuch; that is, thoſe that afflict our Souls while we are (under the conduct of Chriſt) deſigning for a bleſſed eternity; if we indeed make that our buſineſs, and do ſeriouſly intend our ſpirits in order thereto. The darkneſs of our beclouded minds! The glimmering ineffectual apprehenſion we have of the moſt important things! The inconſiſtency of our ſhattered thoughts, when we would apply them to ſpiritual Objects! The great difficulty of working off an ill frame of heart, and the no leſs difficulty of retaining a good! Our being ſo frequently toſt as between Heaven and Hell; when we ſometimes think our ſelves to have even attained and hope to deſcend

1 Cor. 10. 13.

ſcend no more, and are all on a ſuddain plung'd in the Ditch, ſo as that our own Clothes might abhor us; fall ſo low into an earthly temper that we can like nothing Heavenly or Divine, and becauſe we cannot, are enforced juſtly moſt of all to diſlike our ſelves! Are theſe things little with us? How can we forbear to cry out of the depths, to the Father of our ſpirits, that he would pity and relieve his own Off-ſpring? Yea, are we not weary of our crying; and yet more weary of holding in? How do repell'd temptations return again, and vanquiſhed corruptions recover ſtrength? We know not when our work is done. We are miſerable that we need to be always watching, and more miſerable that we cannot watch, but are ſo often ſurprized and overcome of evil. We ſay ſometimes with our ſelves, we will ſeek relief in retirement, but we cannot retire from our ſelves; or in converſe with Godly friends, but they ſometimes prove ſnares to us and we to them; or we hear but our own miſeries repeated in their complaints. Would we pray? How faint is the breath we utter? How long is it e're we can get our Souls poſſeſt with any becoming apprehenſions of God, or lively ſenſe of our own concernments? Would we meditate? We ſometimes go about to compoſe our thoughts, but we may as well aſſay to hold the Winds in our Fiſt. If we venture forth into the world, how do our Senſes betray us? How are we mockt with their impoſtures?

ſtures? Their *nearer* objects become with us the only realities, and eternal things are all vaniſht into airy ſhadows. *Reaſon* and *Faith* are laid aſleep, and our *Senſe* dictates to us what we are to believe and do, as if it were our only Guide and Lord. And what are we not yet weary? Is it reaſonable to continue in this State *of our own choice*? Is miſery become ſo *natural* to us, ſo much our element that we cannot affect to live out of it? Is the darkneſs and dirt of a Dungeon more grateful to us than a free open Air and Sun? Is this Fleſh of ours ſo lovely a thing, that we had rather ſuffer ſo many deaths in it than one in putting it off and mortality with it? While we carry it about us, our Souls impart a kind of life to it, and it gives them death in exchange. Why do we not cry out more feelingly, *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of death?* Is it not grievous to us to have ſo cumberſom a yoke-fellow, to be tied (as *Mezentius* is ſaid to have done) the living and the dead together.

Do not we find the Diſtempers of our Spirits are moſtly from theſe Bodies we are ſo in love with, either as the proper Springs or as the occaſion of them. From what cauſe is our drowſie ſloth, our eager paſſions, our averſion to ſpiritual objects, but from this impure Fleſh; or what elſe is the ſubject about which our vexatious cares, or torturing fears, our bitter griefs are taken up day by day.

And

And why do we not conſider, that 'tis only our love to it that gives ſtrength and vigor to the moſt of our temptations, as wherein it is more immediately concern'd, and which makes them ſo often victorious, and thence to become our after-afflictions. He that hath learn'd to mortifie the inordinate love of the Body, will he make it the buſineſs of his life to purvey for it? Will he offer violence to his own Soul, to ſecure it from violence? Will he comply with mens luſts and humors for its advantage and accommodation; or yeild himſelf to the tyranny of his own *avarice* for its *future*, or of his *more ſenſual luſts* for its *preſent* content? Will it not rather be pleaſing to him, that his outward man be expoſed to periſh, while his inward man is renewed day by day? He to whom the thoughts are grateful of laying it down, will not (though he neglect not duty towards it) ſpend his days in its continual ſervice, and make his Soul an Hell by a continual proviſion for the fleſh and the luſts of it. That is cruel love that ſhall enſlave a man, and ſubject him to ſo vile and ignoble a ſervitude. And it diſcovers a ſordid temper to be ſo impoſed upon. How low are our ſpirits ſunk, that we diſdain not ſo baſe a vaſſalage! God and nature have obliged us to live in Bodies for a time, but they have not obliged us to meaſure our ſelves by them, to confine our deſires and deſigns to their compaſs, to look no further than their concernments, to entertain no previous joyes

in

in the hope of being one day delivered from them. No ſuch hard Law is laid upon us. But how apt are we to become herein a moſt oppreſſive Law to our ſelves; and not only to lodg in filthy earthen Cottages, but to love them and confine our ſelves to them, loath ſo much as to peep out. 'Tis the apt expreſſion of a Philoſopher, upbraiding that baſe low temper, "The degenerous Soul "(ſaith he) buried in the Body, is as a "ſlothful creeping thing, that loves its hole "and is loath to come forth.

Ἡ δὲ δειλὴ ψυχὴ κατορωρυγμένη ἐν σώματι, ὡς ἕρπετον νωθὲς εἰς φωλεὸν, φιλεῖ τὸν φωλεὸν, &c. Max.Tyr.*Diſſ.*41.

And methinks, if we have no love for our better and more noble ſelf, we ſhould not be altogether unapprehenſive of an obligation upon us, to expreſs a dutiful love to the Author of our beings; doth it conſiſt with the love we owe to him, to deſire always to lurk in the dark and never come into his bleſſed preſence? Is that our love, that we never care to come nigh him? Do we not know, *that while we are preſent in the body, we are abſent from the Lord?* Should we not therefore be willing *rather to be preſent with the Lord, and be abſent from the body?* Should we not put on a confidence, an holy fortitude, (as 'tis there expreſt, *we are confident*, or of good courage, and thence *willing, &c.*), that might carry us through the Grave to him. As is the brave Speech of that laſt mentioned Philoſopher, "God

2 Cor. 5. 6, 8.

"will call thee e're long, expect his call. "Old age will come upon thee, and ſhew "thee the way thither; and death, which he "that is poſſeſt with a baſe fear laments and "dreads as it draws on, but he that is a *lover* "*of God* expects it with joy, and with courage meets it when it comes.

Δειλὸς ὀδύρεται, &c. Item, *diſſ.* 1.

Is our love to God ſo faint and weak, that it dares not encounter Death nor venture upon the imaginary terrors of the Grave to go to him? How unſutable is this to the character which is given of a Saints love? And how expreſly are we told, That he who loves his life better than Chriſt, or that even hates it not for his ſake, (as certainly he cannot be ſaid to do, that is not willing to part with it to enjoy him), cannot be his Diſciple? If our love to God be not *ſupreme*, 'tis *none*, or not ſuch as can denominate us lovers of him; and will we pretend to be ſo, when we love a putid fleſh and this baſe earth better than him? And have we not profeſſedly, as a fruit of our avowed love to him, ſurrendred our ſelves? Are we not his devoted ones? Will we be his, and yet our own? Or pretend our ſelves dedicated to his holy pleaſure, and will yet be at our own diſpoſe, and ſo diſpoſe of our ſelves too, as that we may be moſt ungrateful to him, and moſt uncapable of converſe with him? How doth this love of a periſhing life and of a little animated clay ſtop all the effuſions of the love of God, ſuſpend its ſweet and pleaſant fruits, which ſhould be always exerting them-

Cant. 8.

themselves towards him? Where is their love, obedience, joy, and praise, who are through the fear of death all their lives subject to bondage, and kept under a continual dismal expectation of an unavoidable dissolution? But must the great God lose his due acknowledgments because we will not understand wherein he deals well with us? Is his mercy therefore no mercy? As we cannot nullifie his truth by our *unbelief*, so nor his goodness by our *disesteem*. But yet consider, doth it not better become thee to be grateful than repine that God will one day unbind thy Soul and set thee free, knock of thy fetters and deliver thee out of the house of thy bondage? Couldst thou upon deliberate thoughts judg it tolerable, should he doom thee to this earth for ever? *He hath however judged otherwise*, (as the Pagan Emperor and Philosopher excellently speaks), *who is the Author both of the first composition of thy present being and now of the dissolution of it; thou wert the cause of neither, therefore depart and be thankful, for he that dismisseth thee dealeth kindly with thee.* If yet thou understandest it not, yet remember, It is thy Father that disposes thus of thee; How unworthy is it to distrust his love? What child would be afraid to compose it self to sleep in the Parents bosom? It expresses nothing of the duty and ingenuity, but much of the frowardness and folly of a child. They sometimes cry vehemently in the undressing; but should their cries be regarded by the most indulgent Parent?

M. Aurel. Ant. de vit. suâ l. 12. ὅπιθι ἵλεως ὁ ἀπολύων ἵλεως.

rent? Or are they fit to be imitated by us?

We have no excuſe for this our frowardneſs. The bleſſed God hath told us his gracious purpoſes concerning us, and we are capable of underſtanding him. What if he had totally hidden from us our future ſtate; and that we know nothing, but of going into an eternal ſilent darkneſs? The Authority of a Creator ought to have awed us into a ſilent ſubmiſſion. But when we are told of ſuch a glory, that 'tis but drawing aſide this fleſhly vail and we preſently behold it, methinks the bleſſed hour ſhould be expected not with patience only but with raviſhing joy.

Did we hear of a Country in this world, where we might live in continual felicity, without toil, or ſickneſs, or grief, or fear, who would not wiſh to be there, though the paſſage were troubleſom? Have we not heard enough of Heaven to allure us thither? Or is the *eternal truth* of ſuſpected credit with us? Are Gods own reports of the future glory unworthy our belief or regard?

How many, upon the credit of his word, are gone already triumphantly into glory? *That only ſeeing the promiſes afar off were perſwaded of them and embraced them*; and never after owned themſelves under any other notion than of *Pilgrims on earth*, longing to be at home in their moſt deſirable *heavenly Country*. We are not the firſt that are to open Heaven; the main Body of Saints is already there;

Heb. 11. 13. 16.

there; 'tis, in compariſon of their number, but a ſcattering remnant that are now alive upon the earth. How ſhould we long to be aſſociated to that glorious Aſſembly? Methinks we ſhould much more regret our being ſo long left behind.

But if we ſhould deſire ſtill to be ſo, why may not all others as well as we; and as much expect to be gratified as we? And then we ſhould agree in deſiring, that our Redeemers triumph might be defer'd, that his Body might yet remain incompleat, that he might ſtill be debar'd of the long expected fruit of the travail of his Soul, that the name of God might be ſtill ſubjected to the blaſphemy and reproach of an Atheiſtical world, who have long ago ſaid with deriſion, Where is the promiſe of his coming? Would we have all his Deſigns to be ſtill unfiniſht, and ſo mighty wheels ſtand ſtill for us, while we ſport our ſelves in the duſt of the earth, and indulge our ſenſual inclination, which ſure this bold deſire muſt argue to be very predominant in us; and take heed it argue not its habitual prevalency.

At leaſt, if it diſcover not our preſent *ſenſuality*, it diſcovers our former *ſloth* and *idleneſs*. It may be we may excuſe our averſneſs to dye by our unpreparedneſs, that is one fault with another, (though that be beſides the caſe I am ſpeaking of), What then have we been doing all this while? What were the affairs of thy Soul not thought of till

now? Take then thy reproof from a Heathen, that it may convince thee the more,

Sen. "No one, ſaith he, divides away his money "from himſelf, but yet men divide away "their very life---But doth it not ſhame thee "(he after adds) to reſerve only the reliques "of thy life to thy ſelf, and to devote that "time only to a good mind which thou "canſt employ upon no other thing? How "late is it to begin to live when we ſhould "make an end; and defer all good thoughts "to ſuch an age as poſſibly few do ever reach "to. The truth is (as he ſpeaks) we have "not little time but we loſe much, we have "time enough were it well employ'd, there-"fore we cannot ſay we receive a ſhort life, "but we make it ſo, we are not indigent of "time but prodigal: What a pretty contra-"diction is it to complain of the ſhortneſs of "time, and yet do what we can to precipi-"tate its courſe; to haſten it by that we "call paſtime? If it have been ſo with thee, "art thou to be truſted with more time?

But as thy caſe is I cannot wonder that the thoughts of death be moſt unwelcome to thee; who art thou that thou ſhouldſt deſire the day of the Lord; I can only ſay to thee, *haſten thy preparation*, have recourſe to *Rule* 2d. and 3d. and accordingly guide thy ſelf till thou find thy ſpirit made more ſutable to this Bleſſedneſs; that it become ſavory and grateful to thy Soul, and thy heart be ſet upon it. Hence thou may'ſt be reconciled to the Grave, and the thoughts

of

of Death may ceaſe to be a terror to thee.

And when thou art attained ſo far, conſider thy great advantage in being willing and deſirous to die upon this further account, That thy deſire ſhall now be pitcht upon a thing ſo certain. Thine other deſires have met with many a diſappointment. Thou haſt ſet thy heart upon other things, and they have deceived thy moſt earneſt thirſty expectations. Death will not do ſo. Thou wilt now have one certain hope; one thing in reference whereto thou may'ſt ſay, *I am ſure.* Wait a while, this peaceful ſleep will ſhortly ſeize thy Body and awaken thy Soul. It will calmly period all thy troubles, and bring thee to a bleſſed reſt.

But now, if only the meer terror and gloominеſs of dying, trouble thy thoughts, this of all other ſeems the moſt inconſiderable pretence againſt a willing ſurrender of our ſelves to death. *Reaſon* hath overcome it, *natural courage*, yea, ſome mens *Atheiſm*, ſhall not *Faith*? Are we not aſhamed to conſider, what confidence and deſire of death ſome Heathens have expreſt? Some that have had no preapprehenſion or belief of another ſtate, (though there were very few of them), and ſo no hope of a conſequent Bleſſedneſs to relieve them, have yet thought it unreaſonable to diſguſt the thoughts of death. What wouldſt thou think if thou hadſt nothing but the Sophiſms of ſuch to oppoſe to all thy diſmal thoughts? I have met with * one arguing thus,---"Death which is ac-

* Epicurus *in Gaſſend. Synt.*

"counted the moſt dreadful of all evils, is "nothing to us (ſaith he) becauſe while "we are in being Death is not yet preſent, "and when Death is preſent we are not in "being; ſo that it neither concerns us, as "living, nor dead; for while we are alive "it hath not toucht us, when we are dead "we are not.---Moreover (ſaith he) the ex-"quiſite knowledg of this, that Death be-"longs not to us, makes us enjoy this mor-"tal life with comfort; not by adding any "thing to our uncertain time, but by taking "away the deſire of immortality. Shall they comfort themſelves upon ſo wretched a ground, with a little Sophiſtry and the hope of extinguiſhing all deſire of immortality; and ſhall not we, by cheriſhing the bleſſed hope of enjoying ſhortly an immortal glory?

Others of them have ſpoken magnificently of a certain contempt of this bodily life and a not only *not fearing* but *deſiring to dye*, upon a fixed apprehenſion of the diſtinct and purer and immortal nature of the Soul, and the preconceived hope of a conſequent felicity. I ſhall ſet down ſome of their words, added to what have been occaſionally mentioned, (amongſt that plentiful variety wherewith one might fill a Volume), purpoſely to ſhame the more terrene temper of many Chriſtians.

"The Soul (ſaith one of them *) is an in-"viſible thing, and is going into another "place, ſutable to it ſelf, that is noble, and "pure, and inviſible, even into *Hades*, indeed "to the good and wiſe God, whither alſo "my

* Plato in Phedone, *From whom I adjoin what (to them that underſtand it) is more elegant in his own language,* ὃν ἴδης ἀγαπακτοῦντα μέλλοντα ἀποθανεῖσθαι οὐκ ἀρ' φιλόσοφος ἀλλά τις φιλοσώματος. *Ibid.*

* Ἀγρίων ἐρώτων.

"my Soul ſhall ſhortly go, if he ſee good. "But this (he ſaith in what follows) be- "longs only to ſuch a Soul as goes out of the "body pure, that draws nothing corporeal "along with it, did not willingly commu- "nicate with the body in life, but did even "fly from it, and gather up it ſelf into it "ſelf, always meditating this one thing.

"A Soul ſo affected, ſhall it not go to "ſomething like it ſelf, Divine, (and what is "Divine, is immortal and wiſe), whither "when it comes, it becomes bleſſed, free from "error, ignorance, fears, and wild (or enor- "mous) loves, and all other evils incident "to men.

* One writing the life of that rare perſon *Plotinus* ſays, That he ſeemed as if he were in ſome ſort aſhamed that he was in body; which (however it would leſs become a Chriſtian, yet) in one that knew nothing of an *incarnate* Redeemer, it diſcovered a refined noble ſpirit.

* Porphyrius. Plotinus Ennead. 7. Lib. 6. (*whom though a juſt admirer of him would fain have men reckon to have been a Chriſtian, becauſe he writes much againſt the* Pſeudo-*Chriſtian*, Gnoſticks, *nothing againſt Chriſtianity, yet it appears not he ever made profeſſion of it.* Ennead. 1. lib. 7.

The ſame perſon ſpeaks almoſt the language of the Apoſtle, concerning his being rapt up into the third heaven, and tells of ſuch an alienation of the Soul from the Body: "*That when* "*once it finds God* (whom he had before been "ſpeaking of under the name of the τὸ καλὸν "or *the beauty*) *ſhining in upon it, it now no* *longer*

"*longer feels its body, or takes notice of its be-*
"*ing in the body*, but even forgets its own
"being, that it is a man, or a living creature,
"or any thing elſe whatſoever, for it is not
"at leiſure to mind any thing elſe, nor doth
"it deſire to be: Yea, and having ſought him
"out, he immediately meets it, preſenting it
"ſelf to him. It only views him inſtead of
"it ſelf,---and would not now change its ſtate
"for any thing, not if one could give it the
"whole heaven in exchange.

"And elſewhere diſcuſſing, whether life in
"the body be good and deſirable, yea or no,
"he concludes it to be good, not as it is an
"union of the Soul and Body, but as it may
"have that virtue annext to it, by which what
"is really evil may be kept off. But yet, that
"death is a greater good. That life in the bo-
"dy is in it ſelf evil; but the Soul is by *vertue*
"ſtated in *goodneſs*; not as enlivening the bo-
"dy with which it is compounded, but as it
"ſevers and ſejoins it ſelf from it; meaning
"ſo, as to have as little communion as poſſi-
"bly it can with it. To which purpoſe is the
expreſſion of another: "That the Soul of an
"happy man ſo collects and gathers up it ſelf
"out from all things into it ſelf, that it hath
"as it were ſeparated it ſelf from the body
"while it is yet contained in it.---And that it
Marin. Procl. "was poſſeſt of that fortitude, as not to dread
"its departure from it.

Another gives this character of a good man, "That as he liv'd in ſimplicity, tran-
"quility, purity, not being offended at any

that

"that they believed him not to live so; he "also comes to the end of his life, pure, quiet, "and *easie to be dissolved*, disposing himself "without any constraint to his lot. εὐλυτος. M. Aur. Ant.

Another is brought in speaking thus, "If "God should grant me to become a Child a-"gain, to send forth my renewed infant-cries "from my Cradle, and having even run out "my race, to begin it again, I should most "earnestly refuse it; for what profit hath this "life? and how much toil?—Yet I do not "repent that I have lived, because I hope I "have not liv'd in vain. And now I go out "of this life, not as out of my dwelling-house, "but my Inn. O blessed day, when I shall "enter into that Council and Assembly of "Souls, and depart from this rude and dis-"orderly rout and crew, &c. Cato in Cicerone de Senect.

I shall add another, (of a not much unlike strain * and rank, as being either not an open, or no constant friend to Christianity), that discoursing *who is the Heir of Divine things*, saith, "He cannot be, who is in love with "this animal sensitive life; but only that pu-"rest mind that is inspired from above, that "partakes of an heavenly and Divine porti-"on, that only despises the body, &c. with much more of like import. * Philo Judæus.

Yea, so have some been transported with the *desire of immortality*, that (being wholly ignorant of the sin of self-murder), they could not forbear doing violence on themselves.

Among the *Indians*, two thousand years ago, Q. Curt. lib. 8.

ago, were a ſort of wiſe men, as they were called that held it a reproach to die of age, or a diſeaſe, and were wont to burn themſelves alive, thinking the flames were polluted, if they came amidſt them dead.

Cicer. Quæ. Tuſcul.

The ſtory of *Cleombrotus* is famous, who hearing *Plato* diſcourſe of the immortality of the Soul, by the Sea ſide, leapt from him into the Sea, that he might preſently be in that ſtate. And 'tis ſtoried, that * *Nero* reſuſed to put *Apollonius* to death, though he were very much incenſt againſt him, only upon the apprehenſion he had, that he was very deſirous to dye, becauſe he would not ſo far gratifie him.

* Scil. Domitianus aliquoties ſic dictus. *Philoſtr. in vit. Apoll. Tyanæi.*

I only make this improvement of all this; Chriſtian *Principles* and *Rules*, do neither hurry nor miſguide men, but the *end* (as we have it revealed) ſhould much more powerfully and conſtantly attract us. Nothing is more unſuitable to *Chriſtianity* our *way*, nor to that *Bleſſedneſs* the *end* of it, than a terrene ſpirit. They have nothing of the true light and impreſs of the Goſpel now, nor are they ever like to attain the viſion of the bleſſed face of God and the impreſs of his likeneſs hereafter, that deſire it not above all things, and are not willing to quit all things elſe for it.

And is it not a juſt exprobation of our earthlineſs and carnality, if meer Philoſophers and Pagans ſhall give better proof than we of a ſpirit erected above the world, and alienated from what is temporary and terrene? Shall their Gentiliſm outvie our Chriſtianity?

Me-

Methinks a generous indignation of this reproach ſhould inflame our Souls, and contribute ſomewhat to the refining of them to a better and more ſpiritual temper.

Now therefore, O all you that name your ſelves by that worthy name of *Chriſtians*, that profeſs the Religion taught by him that was not of the earth, earthly, but the Lord from heaven; You that are partakers of the heavenly calling, Conſider the great Apoſtle and High-Prieſt of your profeſſion, who only took our fleſh that we might partake of his Spirit, bare our earthly that we might bear his heavenly Image, deſcended that he might cauſe us to aſcend. Seriouſly bethink your ſelves of the ſcope and end of his *Apoſtleſhip* and *Prieſthood*. He was *ſent* out from God to invite and conduct you to him, to bring you into the communion of his glory and bleſſedneſs. He came upon a Meſſage and Treaty of peace. To diſcover his Fathers love and win yours. To let you know how kind thoughts the God of love had conceived to you-wards; and that, however you had hated him without cauſe, and were bent to do ſo without end, he was not ſo affected towards you. To ſettle a friendſhip and to admit you to the participation of his eternal glory. Yea, he came to give an inſtance, and exemplifie to the world in his own Perſon, how much of heaven he could make to dwell in mortal fleſh; how poſſible he could render it, to live in this world as unrelated to it; how glorioufly the divine life could triumph

umph over all the infirmities of frail humanity. And ſo leave men a certain proof and pledg, to what perfections human nature ſhould be improv'd by his grace and ſpirit, in all them that ſhould reſign themſelves to his conduct and follow his ſteps. That heaven and earth were not ſo far aſunder, but he knew how to ſettle a commerce and intercourſe between them. That an heavenly life was *poſſible* to be tranſacted here, and *certain* to be glorioufly rewarded and perfected hereafter.

And having teſtifi'd theſe things, he ſeals the Teſtimony, and opens the way for the accompliſhment of all by his death. Your heavenly *Apoſtle* becomes a *Prieſt* and a *Sacrifice* at once. That no doubt might remain among men of his ſincerity, in what even dying he ceaſed not to profeſs and avow. And that by his own propitiatory blood a mutual reconciliation might be wrought between God and you; that your hearts might be won to him and poſſeſt with an ingenuous ſhame of your ever having been his enemies. And that his diſpleaſure might for ever ceaſe towards you, and be turned into everlaſting friendſhip and love. That eternal redemption being obtained, heaven might be opened to you, and you finally be received to the glory of God. Your hearts being bent thitherward and made willing to run through whatſoever difficulties of life or death to attain it. Do not think, that Chriſt came into the world and died to procure the pardon of your ſins,

and

and ſo tranſlate you to heaven, while your hearts ſhould ſtill remain cleaving to the earth. He came and returned to prepare a way for you; and then call, not drag you thither. That by his Precepts, and Promiſes, and Example, and Spirit, he might form and faſhion your Souls to that glorious ſtate; and make you willing to abandon all things for it. And lo! now the God of all grace is calling you by Jeſus Chriſt unto his eternal Glory. Direct then your eyes and hearts to that mark, *the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus.* 'Tis ignominious, by the common ſuffrage of the civiliz'd world, not to intend the proper buſineſs of our Callings. 'Tis your Calling to forſake this world and mind the other; make haſte then to quit your ſelves of your entanglements, of all earthly diſpoſitions and affections. Learn to live in this world as thoſe that are not of it, that expect every day and wiſh to leave it, whoſe hearts are gone already.

'Tis dreadful to dye with pain and regret; To be forced out of the Body; To die a violent death, and go away with an unwilling reluctant heart. *The wicked is driven away in his wickedneſs.* Fain he would ſtay longer, but cannot. *He hath not power over the Spirit, to retain the Spirit, nor hath he power in death.* He muſt away whether he will or no. And indeed much againſt his will. So it cannot but be where there is not a previous knowledg and love of a better ſtate, where the Soul underſtands it not, and is

not

not effectually attempered and framed to it.

O get then the lovely Image of the future glory into your minds. Keep it ever before your eyes. Make it familiar to your thoughts. Imprint daily there theſe words, *I ſhall behold thy face, I ſhall be ſatisfied with thy likeneſs.* And ſee that your Souls be enricht with that *righteouſneſs*, have inwrought into them that holy rectitude, that may diſpoſe them to that bleſſed ſtate. Then will you dye with your own conſent, and go away, not driven, but allur'd and drawn. You will go, as the redeemed of the Lord, with everlaſting joy upon their heads. As thoſe that know whither you go, even to a ſtate infinitely worthy of your deſires and choice, and where 'tis beſt for you to be. You will part with your Souls, not by a forcible ſeparation, but a joyful ſurrender and reſignation. They will diſlodg from this earthly tabernacle, rather as *putting it off* than having it rent and torn away.

Looſen your ſelves from this body by degrees, as we do any thing we would remove from a place where it ſticks faſt. Gather up your ſpirits into themſelves. Teach them to look upon themſelves as a diſtinct thing. Inure them to the thoughts of a diſſolution. Be continually as taking leave. Croſs and diſprove the common maxim, and let your hearts, which they uſe to ſay are wont to dye laſt, dye firſt. Prevent death, and be mortifi'd towards every earthly thing beforehand, that death may have nothing to kill but your body; and that you may not die a double death in one hour,

hour, and ſuffer the death of your body and of your love to it both at once. Much leſs that *this* ſhould ſurvive to your greater (and even incurable) miſery.

Shake off your Bands and Fetters, the terrene affections that ſo cloſely confine you to the houſe of your bondage. And lift up your heads in expectation of the approaching Jubilee, the day of your redemption; when you are to go out free, and enter into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God; when you ſhall ſerve, and groan, and complain no longer. Let it be your continual ſong, and the matter of your daily praiſe, that the time of your happy deliverance is haſtening on; that ere long you ſhall be abſent from the body, and preſent with the Lord. That he hath not doom'd you to an everlaſting impriſonment within thoſe cloſe and clayie walls, wherein you have been ſo long ſhut up from the beholding of his light and glory. In the thoughts of this, while the outward man is ſenſibly periſhing, let the inward revive and be renewed day by day. "What Priſoner would be ſorry to ſee "the walls of his Priſon Houſe (ſo an Hea- "then ſpeaks) mouldring down, and the "hopes arriving to him of being delivered out "of that darkneſs that had buried him, of re- "covering his liberty and enjoying the free "air and light. What Champion, inur'd to "hardſhip, would ſtick to throw off rotten "rags, and rather expoſe a naked, placid, free "body, to naked, placid, free air? The tru- "ly generous Soul (ſo he a little above) Max. Tyr. *Diſſert.* 41.

"never leaves the body againſt its will.

Rejoice that it is the gracious pleaſure of thy good God, thou ſhalt not always inhabit a Dungeon, nor lie amidſt ſo impure and diſconſolate darkneſs; that he will ſhortly exchange thy filthy Garments for thoſe of Salvation and Praiſe. The end approaches. As you turn over theſe leaves, ſo are your days turned over. And as you are now arrived to the end of this Book, God will ſhortly write *Finis* to the Book of your Life on Earth; and ſhew you your names written in Heaven, in the Book of that Life which ſhall never end.

FINIS.